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Oceans and seas

Report of the Secretary-General*

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I. Introduction

1. By focusing on oceans and seas as its sectoral theme in 1999, the Commission on Sustainable Development is undertaking its first comprehensive review of the subject since its fourth session, in 1996. In its decision 4/15, the Commission called, *inter alia*, for a periodic overall review by the Commission of all aspects of the marine environment and its related issues, as described in chapter 17 of Agenda 21, and for which the overall legal framework is provided by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.[1] The need for such a review was reaffirmed by the General Assembly at its nineteenth special session, in 1997.[2] The Commission further recommended that the results of the Commission's review be considered by the General Assembly under the agenda item "Oceans and the law of the sea". That procedure was endorsed by the Assembly in paragraph 26 of its resolution 53/32 of 24 November 1998.

2. In addition to assessing progress in the implementation of previous Commission decisions on oceans, the seventh session of the Commission will provide a timely opportunity for member States to review and take stock of a number of relevant activities that took place in the context of the 1998 International Year of the Ocean. The Commission may wish to focus its attention on a few issues that are generally considered to be particularly problematic, such as the degradation of the marine environment and adjacent coastal areas through land-based activities; the unsustainable exploitation of marine living resources (both within coastal zones and in the high seas); marine pollution caused by shipping and offshore oil and gas activities; and the protection of fragile ecosystems, including coral reefs and marine biodiversity. The need for reliable and comparable scientific data to assess and advise on global trends, such as climate change, also requires attention, especially in considering the possible implications of sea level rise for small island developing States. In addition, ocean governance and the coordination of ocean-related activities, both by Governments and by international organizations, have been in the forefront of the global dialogue, especially in recent months. Those issues are not new and have been addressed in numerous international, regional, subregional and national forums, including the Commission, for some years. However, there seems to be a new impetus to take practical and effective actions now, following the successful awareness-raising efforts carried out worldwide during the International Year of the Ocean and the world exposition held at Lisbon (Expo'98) on the theme "The oceans: a heritage for the future". The Commission's focus on oceans and seas at the current session will provide a further opportunity to contribute to the ongoing global debate on these critical issues.

II. Current state of the ocean and main trends

3. As indicated above, several key concerns have dominated recent deliberations on ocean issues. But at the same time, it is now well accepted that the complex nature of the marine environment requires an integrated and multisectoral approach to the management of oceans and coastal areas, including considerations of the freshwater systems that drain into them, which incorporates economically, socially and environmentally sound solutions. As concluded by participants at the recent Second London Oceans Workshop, we cannot hope to solve problems in relation to fishing without considering the impact of land-based pollution, and we cannot consider the protection of species or habitats without considering fishing, shipping and land-based pollution. Action in one field must be integrated with that in other related fields.[3]

4. This approach builds on the basic premise contained in chapter 17 of Agenda 21 that the oceans and seas and their adjacent coastal areas form an integrated whole. Nevertheless, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) identified several aspects of the marine environment that required particular attention. These programme areas closely relate to the most urgent problems affecting the oceans, as described above. A brief status report of these areas is set out below.

A. Coastal and marine areas

1. Nature of the problem

5. More than half of the world's population live in coastal areas (usually defined as the land area within 60 kilometres (km) of adjacent near-shore waters), and that proportion could rise to three quarters in the next 20 years. Two thirds of the largest cities are located in coastal areas, bringing with them diversified economic activities and employment opportunities. At the same time, immigration from inland rural areas to coastal cities is increasing, particularly in developing countries, raising the demand for housing, jobs, food, water and other goods and services. The incidence of poverty in coastal areas is increasing along with increasing pressures on limited resources. In addition to the human population, it is estimated that 90 per cent of the world's fish production is dependent on coastal areas

at some time in its life cycle. And marine, estuary and coastal ecosytems, such as coral reefs, wetlands, mangrove forests and seagrass beds, support biological diversity and valuable natural resources.[4]

6. Deterioration of the coastal and marine environment has largely been caused by land-based activities of humans as well as natural phenomena, such as climate change, floods and storms, which together threaten the sustainability of coastal resources. While land-based sources contribute about 80 per cent of marine pollution, the impact of natural disasters and sea level rise on coastal areas is devastating, especially for the most vulnerable populations of small island developing States and densely populated delta areas. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has calculated that the 1997/98 El Niño climate phenomenon affected over 60 countries, most severely in Asia and Central/South America, with devastating hurricanes, floods, drought or fires, causing far-reaching effects on crop, livestock and fish production and extensive human deaths and illness.[5] Human development-related threats to coastal ecosystems are thought to place more than half the world's coasts at a high or moderate potential risk of degradation, while for Europe the corresponding figure is 86 per cent, for Asia it is 69 per cent, and for Africa and South America it is about 50 per cent.[6]

7. Coral reefs, often called the rainforests of the sea because of their valuable ecosystems, are particularly vulnerable to the pressure of human activities, including coastal development, overexploitation and destructive fishing practices, impacts from inland pollution and erosion, and marine-based pollution. According to ReefBase, a global database covering more than 8,000 reefs worldwide, while coral reefs occupy less than one quarter of 1 per cent of the marine environment, they are home to more than one quarter of all known marine fish species. A 1998 report by reef experts from around the world provides the first map-based global analysis of the condition of coral reefs, concluding that 58 per cent of the world's reefs are potentially threatened by human activity, with reefs of South-East Asia more than 80 per cent at risk. Most United States reefs are threatened and almost two thirds of Caribbean reefs.[7] The International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), a partnership among eight Governments and several organizations founded in 1995, led a global awareness-raising campaign during its 1997 International Year of the Reef. Together with Australia's Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, ICRI sponsored an international tropical marine ecosystems management symposium (Townsville, Australia, 23–26 November 1998), to renew and broaden ICRI's call to action in support of the significance of coral reef ecosytems to sustainable development. A particularly timely issue discussed at the symposium was the extent to which the increase in coral bleaching, which weakens and can kill corals, has been caused by global warming or natural causes, including the unusually high sea temperatures associated with the 1997–1998 El Niño phenomenon. Over the past 14 months, an estimated 40 to 50 per cent of the world's reefs have been hit by severe to catastrophic bleaching, including more than 88 per cent of inshore coral on Australia's Great Barrier Reef. Concluding that scientists do not yet have sufficient data to draw linkages between coral bleaching and climate change, the symposium recommended that a multidisciplinary task force be set up immediately to provide information on this matter to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).[8]

2. International, regional and subregional cooperation

8. Since sectoral approaches to coastal development have not proven effective in arresting its deterioration, the concept of integrated coastal area management (ICAM) has gained recognition in recent years as a comprehensive, ecosystem-based approach to sustainable development and environmental conservation. The goal of ICAM is to improve the quality of life of human communities who depend on coastal resources while maintaining the biological diversity and productivity of coastal ecosystems.[9] Cooperation among various stakeholders whose interests may be in conflict is a necessary element and poverty eradication is an important aim. ICAM has been identified as the preferred process for the sustainable management of marine and coastal areas in Agenda 21 (chapter 17), ICRI, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, which has adopted integrated marine and coastal area management as a key programme element to implement the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity.[10] The implementation plan for the Jakarta Mandate is based on six basic principles: the ecosystem approach; the precautionary approach; the importance of science; the use of the Convention on Biological Diversity roster of experts on marine and coastal biological diversity; the involvement of local and indigenous communities; and appropriate levels of implementation. A number of United Nations and other international organizations, including the World Bank, FAO, UNEP, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and IUCN, have

developed comprehensive guidelines for assisting countries to develop ICAM programmes.

9. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the major source for funding coastal management projects. To date, GEF has financed nearly 25 projects in the International Waters Operational Programme, with a total value about $177 million; that number is expected to rise to 40 projects with a portfolio value of roughly $400 million within the next three to five years. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the implementing agency for about half of the current International Waters projects, which include assisting 39 countries bordering the Black Sea, the Red Sea, the South Pacific and the Danube River Basin in formulating strategic action programmes for the protection and rehabilitation of those ecosystems. UNDP has also launched the Strategic Initiative for Ocean and Coastal Area Management to enhance the effectiveness of regional and national programmes and projects through, e.g., the identification and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned, training activities, such as TRAIN-SEA-COAST, an information exchange network and other capacity-building measures. To meet the challenge of deteriorating marine and coastal biodiversity, UNDP-GEF currently supports a $29 million portfolio of projects oriented towards the protection of biodiversity in marine and freshwater ecosystems, including in Lake Titicaca, Belize, Côte d'Ivoire, Yemen, the Comoros, India and the Dominican Republic. Project activities include exotic species control, enhancing marine biodiversity monitoring capacities and involvement of indigenous peoples in marine resource management.

10. The collection and dissemination of oceanographic data, which enable scientists to understand and predict the physical, chemical and biological changes that take place in the world ocean and apply this knowledge to societal needs, has been greatly facilitated by the development of satellite systems and a variety of innovative instruments. Sustaining those efforts is the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), coordinated by UNESCO/IOC, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU). The Coastal Module Panel of GOOS has begun the design of optimal monitoring and forecasting systems for coastal seas, focusing on preserving healthy coastal environments, promoting sustainable use of resources, mitigating coastal hazards, and enabling safe and efficient marine operations. Regional GOOS programmes which support coastal monitoring systems have been developed in the southwest Pacific, the Mediterranean and Africa.

11. Cooperation at the regional and subregional levels is especially important in the development and practical implementation of ICAM programmes, which have received the support of a number of bilateral and international donors. For example, in eastern Africa, the Secretariat for Eastern African Coastal Area Management (SEACAM), which focuses on capacity-building and information-sharing activities, was established in 1997 at Maputo, with financial support from Sweden. A tripartite cooperation agreement between SEACAM, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Nairobi Convention Regional Coordinating Unit on coastal and marine protection is currently being negotiated. In West Africa, six countries have joined together in the Large Marine Ecosystem Project of the Gulf of Guinea, funded by GEF and implemented by UNDP, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UNEP and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration of the United States. The Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management (PACSICOM) was held at Maputo in July 1998, with support from Finland, UNESCO, UNEP and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN). It adopted the Maputo Declaration, which, *inter alia*, affirmed Africa's commitment to incorporate the goals of chapter 17 on sustainable integrated coastal area management into national policies and programmes, and requested the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and AMCEN to consider convening, in 1999, a regional summit of heads of State and Government to focus attention on the hot spots in Africa's aquatic environment, both marine and freshwater.[11] PACSICOM led to an international conference held at Cape Town from 30 November–4 December 1998, organized by the Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS), UNEP and the Government of South Africa. It adopted the Cape Town Declaration on an African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, which has as its immediate aim the strengthening of the Abidjan and Nairobi conventions on the marine and coastal environment in Africa through, *inter alia*, the convening of a partnership conference in the year 2000, involving African countries and donor countries with an interest in assisting Africa's developmental and environmental goals.[12]

12. Other recent regional and subregional initiatives to promote integrated coastal and marine management include the agreement in June 1998 by the Contracting Parties to the Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean Region on a draft protocol on land-based sources of marine pollution, and further ratifications of its 1990 Protocol concerning

Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife, which is expected to enter into force soon; the Caribbean Marine Biodiversity Workshop, sponsored by the Governments of Jamaica and the United Kingdom (Montego Bay, 27–29 October 1998), which identified linkages between marine biodiversity, tourism and integrated fisheries management in the Caribbean region; the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Oceans Conference (Honolulu, Hawaii, 14–16 October 1998), which agreed to pursue partnerships with the private sector and other stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of marine and coastal resources; collaboration among member countries of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in the celebration of the 1997 Pacific Year of the Coral Reef and subsequent development of a five-year Coral Reef Strategic Action Plan; Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) efforts to apply ICAM in the Asian and Pacific region; the development by IUCN, in cooperation with local and European NGOs, of an action plan for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the Caspian Sea; the Mediterranean Action Plan/Mediterranean Environmental Technical Assistance Programme workshop in June 1998 to help identify new investments in ICAM through 2000; and ongoing work by the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, which has identified the sustainable management of coastal zones as a priority area. Furthermore, a new annex V to the 1992 Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (which entered into force on 25 March 1998), which extends its coverage to all human activities other than fisheries, was adopted by the Ministerial Meeting of the Parties to the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic (OSPAR Convention) in July 1998. In addition, the Second London Oceans Workshop, sponsored by the Governments of Brazil and the United Kingdom (London, 10–12 December 1998), looked at coastal issues from a regional perspective, concluding that ICAM programmes need to include provision of adequate scientific education, collection of data and creation of dialogue between scientists, policy makers and other stakeholders, which regional collaboration can help to achieve.

13. A common theme of all these processes is the overwhelming role of land-based activities in the degradation of the marine and coastal environment. In response to a recommendation of UNCED urging global cooperation to address this issue, UNEP organized an intergovernmental conference in 1995 to agree to measures aimed at the prevention, reduction, control and/or elimination of the degradation of the marine environment from land-based activities. Based on the understanding that sustainable patterns of human activity in coastal areas ultimately depend upon a healthy marine environment, and vice versa, the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities was adopted on 3 November 1995 by 109 States. It was subsequently endorsed by the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourth session and by the General Assembly in its resolution 51/189 of 16 December 1996. UNEP serves as secretariat for the programme. Since the Programme of Action has elicited particular interest on the part of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system, some elements of its implementation plan are discussed in section III below.

B. Living marine resources

1. Nature of the problem

14. Recent estimates by FAO indicate that with regard to all major marine fisheries, 35 per cent are subjected to severe overfishing, 25 per cent are fully exploited and 40 per cent still offer scope for development. In other words, at least 60 per cent of world fisheries are either fully exploited or overfished.[13] This situation has been called a crisis in world fisheries.

15. While global fishery production continued to increase in 1996, this was wholly due to the fast-growing contribution from aquaculture (now accounting for 22 per cent of total fish production). According to FAO, marine fishery production began to stagnate in the second half of the 1990s, following two decades of expansion, due to an increasing number of fisheries reaching and surpassing their optimum long-term sustainability. FAO assesses that the total marine catches from most of the main fishing areas in the Atlantic Ocean and some in the Pacific Ocean may have reached their maximum potential years ago, and substantial total catch increases from those areas are unlikely.

16. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its fourth session, noted with concern that significant fish stocks are depleted or overexploited, and considered that urgent corrective action is needed to rebuild depleted fish stocks and to ensure the sustainable use of all fish stocks. While welcoming the fact that progress had been achieved since UNCED in the negotiation of agreements and voluntary instruments for improving the conservation and management of fishery resources and for the protection of the marine environment, the Commission and the General

Assembly urged Governments to prevent or eliminate overfishing and excess fishing capacity through the adoption of management measures and mechanisms to ensure the sustainable utilization of fishery resources, and to undertake programmes of work to achieve the reduction and elimination of wasteful fishing practices.

17. Those recommendations are in accordance with existing international fisheries agreements. However, several important international instruments that could address the threats to fishery resources remain unimplemented. A key to the future regulation of fisheries is the United Nations Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, which though adopted on 4 August 1995, as of 31 December 1998 has only been ratified by 19 States out of 30 required and therefore has not yet entered into force. Nor has any State or entity undertaken to apply it provisionally, as allowed under the Agreement. The Code of Conduct for Responsible Fishing, adopted by the FAO Conference in 1995, and the FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas (the Compliance Agreement) also need to be acceded to or applied with immediate effect; while the Code itself is voluntary, the Compliance Agreement is binding.

18. The recent report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea (A/53/456), prepared for the General Assembly's annual debate on oceans and the law of the sea, noted that despite the adoption of those important agreements, fisheries management has generally failed to protect resources from being overexploited and fisheries from being economically inefficient. The report cites several key factors: lack of political will to make difficult adjustments, particularly in respect of access to fishery resources and fishing rights; persistence of direct and indirect subsidies; lack of control of fishing fleets by flag States; resistance of the fishing industry to changes; lack of participation of traditional fishing communities in the decision-making process; and continued use of destructive fishing practices.[14] Perhaps to address some of those perceived obstacles, the FAO Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research, at its first session, in November 1997, highlighted a need for a shift in emphasis in international applied research in fisheries from the traditional concern with resources to a future programme looking at the human dimension of fisheries.[15]

2. National achievements and international and regional cooperation

19. Governments in several forums have repeatedly stressed the crucial need for urgent action at the national, regional and international levels to address and prevent overcapacity in world fisheries. Excess fishing capacity caused by the overcapitalization of fishing inputs leads to too many vessels chasing too few fish. It currently affects many domestic fisheries throughout the world, and may be even more pervasive in the high seas due to their more open access and the fact that there is as yet no internationally agreed measure to control fishing capacity. It is one reason for the relative stagnation of world marine catches of major species as reported by FAO. FAO also notes that the problem may be exacerbated in the future as the expected demand for fish grows faster than world population, leading to rising fish prices and an increased incentive for further expansion of fishing capacity. Such a situation would create additional pressure on developing countries, including small island developing States, to meet their growing domestic demand for fish as food on the one hand — a problem likely to be aggravated by declining productivity of coastal fisheries due to coral reef degradation, as previously discussed — and to increase their share of international markets on the other.

20. Some achievements have been reported. Many countries have assimilated into national legislation large portions of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, particularly the components on fishery management, fishing operations, aquaculture and the integration of fisheries into coastal area management. Several States have adopted or are elaborating national implementation plans, and some are formulating development plans for ecologically sound and sustainable aquaculture. FAO notes that improving product quality and safety has become a priority area of action for many countries, and that the greatest reductions in fishery losses have been attributed to improvements in post-harvest practices.

21. The FAO secretariat, together with member States, have taken a number of steps to promote the implementation of the Code of Conduct, including the elaboration and distribution of guidelines for fishing operations which utilize the precautionary approach to capture fisheries and species introduction, and the integration of fisheries concerns into coastal area management and aquaculture development. An interregional programme to support activities relating to the implementation of the Code began operation in 1998. Regional workshops on the adaptation of the Code were held in West Africa and the Mediterranean, and a technical consultation on sustainable

shrimp culture was held at Bangkok in December 1997. In March 1998, Canada and FAO sponsored an expert consultation on sustainable fishing technologies and practices to address ways and means of resolving the problem of discarding and dumping of living marine resources (discards are estimated by FAO to amount to 27 million tons of fish annually). And in October 1998, FAO, with the support of Japan, United States and the European Union, held a consultation on the management of fishing capacity, shark fisheries and the incidental catch of sea birds in longline fisheries, which considered a draft plan of action aimed at reducing incidental sea bird catches, as well as draft guidelines for the management of fishing capacity.

22. The FAO consultation referred to above, which had been preceded by a technical working group on the management of fishing capacity in April 1998, approved a draft international instrument entitled "Draft international guidelines/plan of action for the management of fishing capacity". The draft instrument will be submitted for adoption to the FAO Committee on Fisheries at its 15–19 February 1999 session. It will also be considered by the ministerial meeting on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries to be held in Rome on 10 and 11 March 1999.

23. The draft instrument was elaborated within the framework of the Code of Conduct, and would also be a voluntary agreement. Its immediate objective is for States and regional fishery organizations, in the framework of their respective competencies and consistent with international law, to achieve worldwide by 2003/2005 an efficient, equitable and transparent management of fishing capacity. It further specifies, *inter alia*, that States and regional fishery organizations, when confronted with an overcapacity problem which undermines the achievement of long-term sustainability outcomes, should endeavour to limit initially at existing level and progressively reduce the fishing capacity applied to affected fisheries. Furthermore, where long-term sustainability outcomes are being achieved, it nevertheless urges States and regional fisheries organizations to exercise caution. The draft instrument also calls for appropriate support to be provided to developing countries on issues related to the management of their fishing capacity.[16]

24. Also included in the various recommendations to reduce global fishing capacity are calls for the reduction and progressive elimination of subsidies and other economic and fiscal incentives that directly or indirectly promote overcapitalization. Although data on fleet capacity is generally incomplete and the issue is extremely complex, FAO has studied the question as part of its overall review of initiatives to address overcapacity at the global level, and has concluded that a number of countries have taken major steps over the last decade, including strengthening fisheries management methods and reducing economic incentives. While these seem to have contributed to the observed stabilization or reduction in fishing capacity in some areas, such as the northern Atlantic, capacity has increased substantially in other areas and the global situation remains critical.[17]

C. Marine pollution

25. With regard to the prevention and control of marine pollution from shipping and related activities, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 (MARPOL 73/78), and the 1990 International Convention on Oil Pollution Preparedness, Response and Cooperation (OPRC) have proven effective in the control and management of sea-based sources of marine pollution. Statistics collected by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), which oversees those two Conventions, show that their progressive implementation and enforcement have reduced considerably marine pollution from shipping, and that more States have improved their preparedness and response to marine pollution incidents. IMO has also reported that the dumping of industrial wastes and other matter at sea has been nearly eliminated by Contracting Parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter of 1972 (London Convention). However, as recent press reports have made clear, a major gap in enforcing this and other international marine conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, occurs when polluting ships have not acceded to those agreements or fly non-Party "flags of convenience".[18] In the view of some major international trade union groups, the lack of flag State implementation and the absence of enforcement provisions constitute a serious weakness in the international regulatory regime.[19] The 1996 Protocol to the London Convention will eventually replace the London Convention when the Protocol enters into force after accession by 26 States, of which at least 15 are Contracting Parties to the London Convention; as of 31 December 1998, only three States have acceded to the Protocol. The 1996 Protocol will strengthen the globally applicable rules on dumping of wastes and other matter at sea by taking a precautionary and proactive approach and incorporating the polluter-pays principle. It further emphasizes the need for technical cooperation between Contracting Parties, and for

the establishment of assistance mechanisms between developed and developing country Parties. Under the 1996 Protocol, the export of wastes and other matter for the purpose of dumping at sea will be prohibited.

26. In response to specific concerns raised in chapter 17 of Agenda 21, the IMO secretariat and its governing bodies have undertaken a number of new or expanded initiatives with respect to prevention of air pollution from ships; new special sea areas and particularly sensitive sea areas; irradiated nuclear fuel on board ships; traffic separation schemes and mandatory ship-reporting systems; port State control; and the preparation of measures against tributyltin-based anti-fouling paints for ships.

27. Progress by the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) to draft a new Protocol to the OPRC Convention to cover hazardous and noxious substances has reached its final stage, and an international conference is planned for the year 2000 with a view to its adoption. Separately in July 1998, the 15 European countries that are signatories to the OSPAR Convention agreed to a far-reaching strategy for preventing the dumping of radioactive wastes and other hazardous substances in the North-East Atlantic. And the Pacific Ocean Pollution Prevention Programme of SPREP aims at coordinating regional efforts among 14 South Pacific countries to address shipping-related pollution. In 1998, UNEP convened the first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for an International Legally Binding Instrument for Implementing International Action on Certain Persistent Organic Pollutants. The second session is being held at Nairobi from 25 to 29 January 1999. The expectation is for a convention on persistent organic pollutants to be adopted in 2000.

28. Following UNCED's request for IMO to develop legally binding provisions regarding ballast water management to prevent the introduction of harmful aquatic organisms through ships' ballast water, MEPC developed a set of guidelines for the control and management of ships' ballast water, which were adopted by the IMO Assembly in 1997. IMO is continuing work on the development of mandatory regulations on ballast water management and associated implementation guidelines, including a model ballast water management plan. The aim is to complete all preparatory work by 1999 so that an international conference can be convened in the biennium 2000–2001 to adopt the regulations.[20]

29. An important area requiring further attention relates to offshore oil and gas exploration and production activities, which are not covered by MARPOL 73/78 and for which there is no international treaty instrument regulating this source of marine pollution. There are, however, a number of regional agreements, including the Helsinki and Barcelona Conventions and the Kuwait Protocol. It may be recalled that chapter 17 of Agenda 21 called on States, acting individually, bilaterally, regionally or multilaterally and within the framework of IMO and other relevant international organizations, to assess the need for additional measures to address degradation of the marine environment from offshore oil and gas platforms. In response, IMO addressed the matter of marine pollution from offshore platforms and reported to the Commission at its fourth session, in 1996, that States had concluded that the regional approach should be encouraged, and IMO saw no compelling need at that time to further develop globally applicable environmental regulations. The argument in favour of that approach was that offshore installations were generally fixed and therefore only posed a threat of local pollution, which could be dealt with by national or regional agreements. The Commission took note of that conclusion, and encouraged States to continue their review of the need for further measures. Subsequently, IMO/MEPC assessed the situation again in July 1996 and found that while offshore oil and gas activities had accelerated in many parts of the world, expectations for regional and national regulations had not been fulfilled. MEPC noted that in many regions no mechanisms controlling discharges from offshore activities existed, and recommended a new assessment of current national, regional and global regulations.[21]

30. In response to those concerns, an international expert meeting on environmental practices in offshore oil and gas activities was held at Noordwijk, the Netherlands, in November 1997. Additional consultations are anticipated, and the Second London Oceans Workshop, held in December 1998, endorsed the view that further meetings should be held on a regular basis which would bring together representatives of Governments, industry, regulators, NGOs and other interested parties for the exchange and dissemination of information. It was recommended that those meetings focus on guidelines for satisfactory environmental management systems and the regional environmental goals that such systems should aim to achieve.[3]

III. Issues requiring further attention

A. Global Programme of Action

31. The aim of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based

Activities (A/51/116, annex II) is to facilitate the realization of the duty of States to preserve and protect the marine environment, in accordance with articles 207 and 213 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. It is not a legally binding instrument; it was designed to be a source of conceptual and practical guidance, setting forth desired actions to be taken at the national level and through regional and international cooperation. It is based on preventive, precautionary and anticipatory approaches, and urges States to develop economic incentives, where appropriate, such as the polluter-pays principle, so as to avoid degradation of the marine environment.

32. The Global Programme of Action states at the outset that its implementation will require new approaches by and new forms of collaboration among Governments, organizations and institutions with responsibilities and expertise relevant to marine and coastal areas, at all levels — national, regional and global — including the promotion of innovative financial mechanisms to generate needed resources. Regional and subregional cooperation are seen to be crucial, and a revitalization of the UNEP Regional Seas Programme is an important ancillary goal. Another goal is the development of a clearing house mechanism, i.e., a referral system providing access to current sources of information, practical experiences, and scientific and technical expertise, as well as possible funding sources. UNEP is to coordinate the development of the clearing house in collaboration with United Nations agencies and organizations which have lead responsibility for a number of specific pollutant source categories, as defined in General Assembly resolution 51/189. In addition to those responsibilities, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UNESCO/IOC and UNEP have already joined forces in an active inter-agency programme on marine pollution, providing data quality assurance services to regional programmes and national laboratories.

33. The Global Programme of Action also requires UNEP to convene periodic intergovernmental meetings, in close cooperation with other relevant organizations and institutions, to review overall progress on its implementation as well as the results of scientific assessments of the impact of land-based activities on the marine environment, including that currently under preparation by the United Nations-sponsored Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP). Originally planned for 2000, the UNEP secretariat is now proposing that the first formal intergovernmental review take place in 2001 or 2002, with perhaps a preliminary review earlier.

34. Although no formal assessment of its implementation has yet taken place, some preliminary observations are possible three years after the adoption of the Global Programme of Action. At the invitation of the Government of the Netherlands, a coordination office for the Global Programme of Action was opened at the Hague in November 1997. As of January 1999, the staffing is not yet fully completed and the Director is under recruitment. To facilitate inter-agency cooperation, especially with respect to the clearing-house mechanism, the UNEP Governing Council, at its nineteenth session, invited the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas to perform the functions of an inter-agency steering committee on technical cooperation and assistance for the Global Programme of Action, in collaboration with the ACC Subcommittee on Water Resources, and with representation from relevant regional and international organizations.[22] To date, discussions of future responsibilities are at a very preliminary stage. A draft strategy paper identifying proposed actions was considered by an ad hoc meeting of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas at the Hague in June 1998; the Global Programme of Action coordination office will convene a consultation with non-governmental organizations to discuss the matter further in April/May 1999. UNEP has indicated that it is planning to convene a technical meeting in 1999 to establish steering or technical implementation groups for the central clearing house mechanism. An interim central home page of the Global Programme of Action coordination office was recently opened (http://www.chem.unep.ch/gpa) and an initial persistent organic pollutants home page has been developed by UNEP. Plans are under way to initiate the heavy metals component of the clearing house. But the development of the clearing house has been hindered by the fact that the governing bodies of only three agencies (the World Health Organization (WHO), IAEA and UNESCO/IOC) have adopted resolutions in support of the Global Programme of Action, and both WHO and IMO have indicated that they would be unable to take the lead agency role for their respective source categories without additional financial resources. FAO has in principle agreed to collaborate in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, in particular with reference to the subject areas covering nutrients and sediment mobilization. Governments are urged to follow up expeditiously their agreement, as contained in General Assembly resolution A/51/189 and UNEP Governing Council decision 19/14 A, to take the necessary action within the governing bodies of relevant United Nations organizations and programmes and other competent international and regional organizations for the formal endorsement of the Global Programme of Action,

and to accord appropriate priority to its implementation in their respective work programmes, in accordance with each organization's mandates.

35. Perhaps the most substantive activities in support of the Global Programme of Action have been at the regional level. UNEP has convened a series of seven regional technical workshops during 1996–1998 under the auspices of its Regional Seas Programme, and two more are planned for 1999. Governments in all the workshops to date have identified sewage as a major priority pollutant, and as a result UNEP is considering the possibility of convening a global conference by the year 2000 to address sewage as a major land-based source of pollution affecting human and ecosystem health.[23]

36. In June 1998 at the Hague, UNEP convened the first interregional seas programme consultation, which brought together the secretariats and coordinating units of the UNEP Regional Seas Programme as well as other regional organizations. Among the issues discussed was the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, including the clearing house, at the regional level. Draft regional programmes of action supporting the Global Programme of Action have been developed or are under preparation in several regions. The Global Programme of Action coordination office is promoting the adoption of those regional programmes, and will facilitate the development of projects for funding by appropriate organizations in several regions.

37. Funding remains a major barrier to implementation of the Global Programme of Action. UNEP has reported that whereas projects that support the goals of the Global Programme of Action may be eligible for funding by GEF, the Global Programme of Action per se is not. Thus, the development and maintenance of the clearing house, for example, will need additional funding from other sources. The mobilization of financial resources, including from the private sector, is expected to be a major activity of the coordination office.

38. Those and other issues were discussed at an informal intergovernmental consultation to review the status and further steps in implementation of the Global Programme of Action, convened by UNEP at the Hague in May 1998. UNEP reported to the meeting that a number of relevant activities have been initiated by UNEP over the last two years; however, many have been conducted on an ad hoc basis, due largely to inadequate human resources.[24] Concern over a lack of momentum in implementing the Global Programme of Action was also expressed at the recent Second London Oceans Workshop, which concluded that it is essential to revitalize the Global Programme of Action.[3] It is hoped that the completion of the restructuring of the UNEP secretariat and the resolution of other institutional delays in the United Nations system will help to facilitate implementation of the Global Programme of Action. The international community also needs to highlight the issue as a matter of priority on the agendas of all relevant intergovernmental bodies.

B. Fisheries management

39. As observed in section II above, following expansion of global catches during the 1970s and 1980s, a stagnation in total yield of marine capture fisheries has become apparent in the second half of the 1990s, which is considered to be the result of an increasing number of fisheries reaching and surpassing their optimum long-term sustainability. On a more positive note, however, in a 1997 study of future prospects of marine fishery landings, FAO concluded that an increase in fisheries production of at least 10 million and as much as 20 million tons annually would be possible if fishing pressures were relaxed, allowing stocks to rehabilitate, and if effective management measures were adopted, including the reduction of discarding and wastage.[25]

40. The elements needed for good governance in the fisheries sector are well recognized: the need for a strategy explicitly aimed at ecological, economic and social sustainability; effective fisheries agencies and research institutions; a cooperative, organized and informed fisheries sector; adequate laws and legal institutions, including deterrent monitoring, control and surveillance; and appropriate linkages with regional and international bodies. An essential requirement for securing long-term sustainable fisheries and aquaculture is the full implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, adopted by the FAO Conference in 1995, and other international fishery instruments. The political will to accept and operationalize those agreements and to adopt well-conceived national policies to support them are fundamental to facilitating the required structural change in the fisheries sector. And as FAO has noted, the complex array of internal and external pressures acting on the fisheries sector call for responsible, timely, coordinated and comprehensive responses by national fishery administrations and regional fishery bodies if governance is to be strengthened. Priority action is required by coastal and fishing States towards reducing overcapacities in fisheries, eliminating by-catch, in particular of endangered species, and improving information

systems, especially regarding high seas fishing fleets. But a global approach is also needed to address the global overcapacity problem. And the real value of fish and fish products will have to be acknowledged, in terms of economic and social contributions as well as the environmental costs (for example, of uncontrolled aquaculture), especially for the developing countries, whose net fisheries exports have now grown to be worth an estimated $13 billion annually.

41. The precautionary approach to global fisheries management is a central feature of the FAO Code of Conduct and the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement. As elaborated in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the precautionary approach may be defined as follows: "Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation." An array of precautionary instruments for the preservation of marine resources has been described in the recent report of the Independent World Commission on the Oceans (IWCO) to include protected areas and access restrictions (such as marine reserves, quotas, closed seasons); property rights (e.g., individual transferable quotas, fishing licenses); taxes and charges; penalties and fines; and financial incentives.[26]

42. One of those instruments, the creation of "no take" marine protected areas (MPAs) to reduce overfishing and rebuild declining fish populations, has received increasing attention by Governments and regional and non-governmental organizations in recent years. The existing number of MPAs (1,324) are estimated to cover less than 1 per cent of the planet's marine area, so the scope for enlargement is vast.[27] The largest MPA in the world is the 350,000 km^2 Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in Australia, and that country has in 1998 claimed the second largest MPA as well, the Great Australian Bight Marine Park. Almost all MPAs have been designated by national authorities, since legal and practical obstacles would seem to prevent them in the high seas; however, one exception is the Indian Ocean and Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuaries established by the International Whaling Commission. Australia has proposed the development of a global representative system of marine protected areas to encourage States to establish MPAs within and across national jurisdictions.

43. Another proposal to help manage sustainable fisheries is eco-labelling or accreditation. The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), founded in 1996 as a joint initiative between Unilever Ltd. and the World Wide Fund for Nature and now an independent, non-governmental, non-profit body based in the United Kingdom, launched its accreditation scheme in June 1998. It seeks to establish a system of certification for individual fisheries or fish stocks, as well as fishing practices, gear and individual fishers, certifying that fish have been caught in a sustainable manner, from boat to consumer. MSC will hold a conference on that and other fisheries issues in New York on 19 and 20 April 1999, to coincide with the opening of the seventh session of the Commission.[28] Separately, FAO held a technical consultation on the feasibility of developing guidelines for eco-labelling of marine capture fisheries in October 1998, which agreed, *inter alia*, that any international guidelines on eco-labelling that might be developed should be consistent with the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, as well as ongoing related work, including work by the World Trade Organization; should be of a voluntary nature and market-driven; should recognize the sovereign rights of States and comply with all relevant laws and regulations; should be non-discriminatory and allow for fair competition and free trade; should establish clear accountability; and should be based on the best scientific evidence. No agreement was reached on the practicality and feasibility of FAO drafting technical guidelines for eco-labelling, but it was suggested that further work might be carried out to assess the costs and benefits of eco-labelling and whether it would result in real net gains to fisheries.[29]

44. The issue of subsidies is a complex one. The first comprehensive effort to measure global subsidies to the fishing sector was undertaken by FAO in 1992, and estimated that as of 1989 the world was paying $124 billion to land $70 billion worth of fish, leaving a level of subsidy of $54 billion annually. Subsequent alterations to the methodology have led to substantial downward revisions, including by the World Bank, of $14 to $20 billion a year,[30] which still amounts to about one quarter of the value of the marine fish catch, and subsidies are clearly a significant cause of overfishing and excess fishing capacity that requires further attention. The General Assembly, at its nineteenth special session in 1997, urged Governments to consider the positive and negative impact of subsidies on the conservation and management of fisheries through national, regional and appropriate international organizations, and based on those analyses to consider appropriate action.

C. International cooperation and coordination

45. The 1998 International Year of the Ocean and the world exposition on the oceans held at Lisbon in 1998 have provided a focus for worldwide attention to the riches of the oceans, as well as to the risks that threaten the sustainable use and enjoyment of their resources. In 1998, IWCO, chaired by former Portuguese President Mario Soares, completed its landmark report *The Ocean: Our Future*.[26] That report and other reports, seminars and conferences have looked at the concept of ocean governance as a particular priority, requiring attention at the international, regional and national levels, reflecting a growing consensus expressed by Governments, institutions and NGOs that the system currently in place may not be as effective as is needed to solve the multidimensional problems affecting the oceans.[31]

46. Based on the understanding that the problems of ocean space are closely interrelated and need to be considered as a whole, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea provides the legal framework for chapter 17 of Agenda 21, as well as the foundation for a system of ocean governance. That integrated concept should be reflected in the way that the United Nations considers ocean issues; however, for some observers intergovernmental debate and actions are too fragmented, following the sectoral approach that identifies the different organizations in the United Nations system and that has developed over the years.

47. At the same time, the General Assembly undertakes an annual discussion of developments relating to oceans and seas under its newly expanded agenda item, "Oceans and the law of the sea"; however, this is traditionally scheduled for one day only and may not be sufficient for the task. There is some awareness that if the objectives of the Convention and chapter 17 are to be fulfilled, it will be necessary for the General Assembly to take a more active part in oceans governance, anticipating areas of concern and devising strategies to address them effectively. That view was expressed by several Member States at the fifty-third session of the Assembly[32] and at other recent forums, such as the Second London Oceans Workshop, which suggested that the General Assembly be invited to consider how the annual debate on oceans and the law of the sea could be broadened and better prepared.[3, 33]

48. Some observers have suggested that a new forum on oceans is required, such as a standing committee of the whole of the Assembly, to adequately prepare for and follow up on the annual debate. The Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, in his address to the Assembly in 1997, noted that the question had been raised in the meetings of the States Parties to the Convention, and that the need for an additional forum was self-evident. He went on to state that an appropriate forum was not yet available that allowed for full participation and broad exchange of views among all interest groups. There were economic and environmental and other groupings that felt that the discussion in the General Assembly on oceans-related matters was biased towards legal and political aspects, and that developments in other areas of interest, where major developments were taking place, were not adequately represented in the debate. The challenge for the General Assembly was how to respond to the various initiatives to devise a global forum that reflected that integrated approach.[34]

49. IWCO has proposed the convening, at an early opportunity, of a United Nations conference on ocean affairs to advance the process of change and innovation within the intergovernmental system. IWCO suggests that such a conference take as its basis the Convention and other relevant international treaties but that it not be a law-making body. IWCO also urges the establishment of a world ocean affairs observatory to independently monitor the system of ocean governance and exercise an "external watch" on ocean affairs, and proposes convening an independent world ocean forum representing civil society and all stakeholders. IWCO further suggests that a comprehensive review of the mandates and programmes of all United Nations bodies and agencies competent in ocean affairs be undertaken.[35]

50. The concept of the integrated management of ocean space has been before the international community for more than three decades. Ideas of how to manage the "common heritage of mankind" (the high seas beyond national jurisdiction) were put before the General Assembly back in 1967 by the Government of Malta, and the issue was relaunched by Malta's subsequent Foreign Minister and President of the forty-fifth General Assembly, who in 1990 proposed that the Trusteeship Council be given the new mandate of coordinating international protection of the common heritage, including the oceans and seas, the atmosphere and outer space. That new concept of trusteeship was endorsed by the Secretary-General in his July 1997 report on United Nations reform (see A/51/950, paras. 84 and 85).[36]

51. The generally sectoral nature of institutions working in ocean affairs, including United Nations organizations, has led to concerns about fragmentation and lack of coordination. Thus, the Commission on Sustainable Development, at its fourth session, in assessing the inter-

agency mechanism set up after UNCED to cover ocean issues, concluded that in order to address the need for improved coordination, the Secretary-General should be invited to review the working of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas with a view to improving its status and effectiveness, including the need for closer inter-agency links between, *inter alia*, the secretariat of the Subcommittee and UNEP.[37] Pursuant to that decision, in 1997, the ACC Subcommittee elected the Director of the Water Branch of UNEP as its new Chairperson, who remained until her departure from UNEP in December 1998, while UNESCO/IOC has continued to provide its secretariat. The Director, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the United Nations Office of Legal Affairs serves as Vice-Chairman. The other core members currently include FAO, IMO, IAEA, the World Bank, WHO, WMO, UNIDO, UNDP and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Hydrographic Organization and the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea have also participated in sessions of the Subcommittee.

52. It appears that a combination of communication difficulties between secretariats and staffing problems have weakened the coordinating role expected of the ACC Subcommittee in its work as Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) task manager for chapter 17 and its preparations for the seventh session of the Commission. The draft report of the Secretary-General on oceans and seas, which was to be prepared by the Subcommittee, benefited from the inputs of only some of its member organizations. Information contained in the report on activities related to certain important issues is therefore not as complete and up-to-date as desired. The Commission may therefore wish to reiterate its request to the Secretary-General to review the working of the ACC Subcommittee on Oceans and Coastal Areas with a view to improving its effectiveness.

53. At its fourth session, the Commission also invited the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the agencies and organizations of the United Nations system sponsoring GESAMP to review the Group's terms of reference, composition and methods of work with a view to improving its effectiveness and comprehensiveness while maintaining its status as a source of agreed, independent scientific advice.[38] That recommendation was endorsed by the Second London Oceans Workshop in December 1998, which also urged that means be found for considering the economic and social aspects of the questions examined by GESAMP. IMO, as the administrative secretariat of GESAMP, has called an intersecretariat meeting in August 1999 to review the terms of reference of the Group together with its modus operandi in response to the Commission's recommendations. GESAMP generally carries out its activities through inter-sessional working groups. In 1996, the Group set up a working group on marine environmental assessments, with UNEP as lead agency, which is preparing an assessment of land-based activities for the year 1999. The next full assessment of the state of the marine environment is planned for 2002. GESAMP has also established cooperative mechanisms with the global international waters assessment, a four-year $13 million project funded by GEF, the Government of Sweden and others, and being implemented by UNEP, in areas of mutual interest within both review exercises.

Notes

[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 8* (E/1996/28), chap. I, sect. C., decision 4/15, para. 45 (a).

[2] See General Assembly resolution S-19/2, annex, para. 36.

[3] See report of the Co-Chairmen on the Second London Oceans Workshop, London, 10–12 December 1998.

[4] See Nadia Scialabba, ed., *Integrated Coastal Area Management and Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries: FAO Guidelines* (Rome, FAO, 1998).

[5] Based on an FAO press release of 31 July 1998.

[6] See World Resources Institute, *World Resources, 1996–1997* (Oxford University Press, 1996), cited in Scialabba, op. cit., pp. 10 and 11.

[7] See World Resources Institute, International Centre for the Living Aquatic Resources Management, World Conservation Monitoring Centre and United Nations Environment Programme, *Reefs at Risk: A Map-based Indicator of Threats to the World's Coral Reefs* (Washington, D.C., 1998).

[8] See International Coral Reef Initiative, "Renewed call to action", annex, International Tropical Marine Ecosytems Management Symposium, Townsville, Australia, 23–26 November 1998. Information on coral bleaching provided by the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, a joint project of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN). The fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Bratislava, May 1998) also looked at this phenomenon and requested its Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to provide relevant information to the fifth meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention. It also invited the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to urgently address the issue.

[9] As described by the United Nations-sponsored Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) in 1996.

[10] The Jakarta Mandate, included as part of the Ministerial Statement adopted by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at Jakarta in November 1995, identifies as priority issues marine and coastal living resources, marine and coastal protected areas, mariculture and alien species.

[11] See Pan-African Conference on Sustainable Integrated Coastal Management, Maputo, 18–24 July 1998, summary record of the main conclusions and specific recommendations (Maputo, Ministry for Coordination of Environmental Affairs, 1998).

[12] See Cape Town Declaration on an African Process for the Development and Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, adopted by the ACOPS Conference on Cooperation for Development and Protection of the Marine and Coastal Environment in sub-Saharan Africa, Cape Town, 30 November–4 December 1998; during the Conference, the United Kingdom Minister for International Development announced that his Government would fund a £20 million programme of support for small-scale fishing communities in 24 countries of West Africa.

[13] See FAO, "In-depth study: patterns of marine fishery landings and future prospects", Rome, 1997; also various FAO press releases, 1998. FAO calculations cover 200 major fish resources, accounting for 77 per cent of world marine fish landings.

[14] See paras. 261–265; the report also contains a comprehensive review by regions of the status of fisheries and conservation and management measures (paras. 266–292).

[15] See FAO, report of the first session of the Advisory Committee on Fisheries Research, Rome, 25–28 November 1997.

[16] See FAO, Committee on Fisheries, twenty-third session, Rome, 15–19 February 1999, document COFI/99/5, part III; and FAO, "The management of fishing capacity: a new but crucial issue for sustainable world fisheries", report to the ministerial meeting on the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, Rome, 10 and 11 March 1999.

[17] See FAO, "The management of fishing capacity ...", para. 7.

[18] See, for example, "Gaps in sea laws shield pollution by cruise lines", *The New York Times*, 3 January 1999; the article dealt with a four-year-long case in United States courts against the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, which eventually pleaded guilty to dumping oily wastes into the sea and was fined $9 million.

[19] See joint submission by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the International Transport Federation and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to OECD, joined by Greenpeace International, 30 November 1998.

[20] See IMO, report of the Consultative Meeting of Contracting Parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter of 1972, London, 14–18 December 1998; other recent IMO activities are reported in IMO, Marine Environment Protection Committee, Report of IMO to the Commission on Sustainable Development, November 1998, background document.

[21] See IMO, report to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its fourth session, December 1995; *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 8* (E/1996/28), chap. I.C, decision 4/15, paras. 26–28; and IMO, report to the Commission at its sixth session.

[22] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, 1997, Supplement No. 25* (A/52/25), decision 19/14 A, para. 12.

[23] For further details, see UNEP, "Status report on implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities", report of the Executive Director (UNEP/GC.20/32); and progress report on implementation of the Global Programme of Action, submitted by UNEP to the Second London Oceans Workshop, London, 10–12 December 1998.

[24] See UNEP, "Consideration of further steps, timetable and modalities for the activities of the GPA coordination office at the Hague", discussion paper submitted to informal intergovernmental consultation on the Global Programme of Action, the Hague, 11 and 12 May 1998.

[25] See FAO, "In-depth study: patterns of marine fishery landings and future prospects" (1997), based on R. J. R. Grainger and S. M. Garcia, *Chronicles of Marine Fishery Landings (1950–1994): Trend Analysis and Fisheries Potential*, FAO Fisheries Technical Paper, No. 359 (Rome, 1996).

[26] See Independent World Commission on the Oceans, *The Ocean: Our Future* (Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 108–110.

[27] See ibid., pp. 199–201, based on various sources.

[28] See Marine Stewardship Council, *MSC News*, various issues, and background information; the MSC conference is entitled "Sustainable fisheries: options for the future", and will be held at the Regal United Nations Plaza Hotel in New York.

[29] See FAO, *Report of the Technical Consultation on the Feasibility of Developing Non-Discriminatory Technical Guidelines for Eco-Labelling of Products from Marine Capture Fisheries, Rome, 21–23 October 1998*, FAO Fisheries Report, No. 594.

[30] See FAO, *The State of Food and Agriculture* (Rome, 1992); and Matteo Milazzo, *Subsidies in World Fisheries: A Re-examination*, World Bank Technical Paper, No. 405 (1998); for a discussion of the various methodologies used in calculating subsidies as well as their relationship to international trade law, see Christopher D. Stone, "Too many fishing boats, too few fish: can trade laws trim subsidies and restore the balance in global fisheries?", *Ecology Law Quarterly*, vol. 24 (1997), No. 3, p. 505.

[31] The multidimensional nature of the oceans can be seen in the linkage between the marine and coastal environment and the high seas with overall security issues. As pointed out at two recent international conferences on oceans and security, it might be easier to mobilize the necessary political and economic infrastructure if the strategy to protect the world's oceans is conceived within the framework of ocean security:

economic security, food security, environmental security and political security. See Advisory Committee on Protection of the Sea (ACOPS), "Towards enhanced ocean security into the third millennium", report of the ACOPS/GLOBE conference on the theme "Towards enhanced ocean security into the third millennium", Stockholm, 31 January–2 February 1998, and the ACOPS conference on the theme "Oceans and security",Washington, D.C., 19–21 May 1997. The two conferences resulted in the Stockholm Action Strategy and the Potomac Declaration, respectively.

[32] See United Nations press releases GA/9513 and GA/9514 of 24 November 1998.

[33] The suggestion was also made to establish a mechanism similar to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to deal with ocean issues as a whole or marine pollution issues.

[34] See statement to the General Assembly by Satya N. Nandan, Secretary-General of the International Seabed Authority, 24 November 1998.

[35] See IWOC, op. cit., pp. 21–23 and 157–159. For a summary of the results of the work of IWCO, see A/53/524, annex. Separately, the World Youth Forum, held at Braga, Portugal, from 2 to 7 August 1998, adopted the World Youth Declaration on Oceans, confirming the responsibility of youth to take initiatives in implementing measures to help protect the oceans.

[36] For a comprehensive history of this debate, see Peter Bautista Payoyo, ed., *Ocean Governance: Sustainable Development of the Seas* (United Nations University Press, Tokyo, 1994), which contains the report of the *pacem in maribus* conference held in 1991. This annual conference of the International Ocean Institute was most recently held from 29 November to 3 December 1998 at Halifax, Canada, on the theme "The crisis of knowledge: new directions for learning and informed decision-making for oceans and coasts".

[37] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 8* (E/1996/28), chap. I., sect. C, decision 4/15, para. 45 (b).

[38] Ibid., para. 45 (c); the following bodies are sponsors of GESAMP: Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the United Nations Secretariat, UNEP, FAO, UNESCO/IOC, WHO, WMO, IMO and IAEA.

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Tourism and sustainable development*

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. The tourism industry, one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the global economy, has important economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts. Its continuing growth has important implications for the achievement of sustainable development, particularly in small island developing States and tourist destinations with fragile ecological environments. The tourism industry encompasses a large number of different travel-related activities, including, *inter alia*, hospitality enterprises, souvenir and craft businesses, travel agencies, transport enterprises, tour operators and tourist guides. The demand for new forms of tourism is growing in many countries and presents new challenges for the tourism industry, national Governments and the international community.

2. The United Nations and its agencies have addressed the importance of tourism and sustainable development on various occasions. In 1997, the General Assembly at its special session to review the implementation of Agenda 21 (23–28 June 1997), noted the importance of tourism and requested the development of an action plan for tourism. More recently, the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1998/40 of 30 July 1998, recommended that the General Assembly declare 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism. It requested a report containing the programmes and activities undertaken by Governments and interested organizations during the year, an assessment of the results achieved in encouraging ecotourism in developing countries and recommendations to promote ecotourism within the framework of sustainable development.

3. The present report discusses the interrelated economic, social and environmental issues associated with tourism to arrive at policy options that may be dealt with in an integrated policy framework for the development of sustainable tourism.

II. Tourism and economic development

4. In recent decades, tourism in the global economy has grown rapidly, consistently outstripping annual growth rates for world gross national product (GNP), world merchandise exports and world trade in services. As a result, the share of international tourism in global economic activity has risen steadily: in 1997, global tourism activities accounted for about 1.5 per cent of world GNP, 8 per cent of world merchandise exports by value and 35 per cent of the value of world exports of services. One of the major economic impacts of this rapid expansion in international tourism has been significant employment creation: the hotel accommodation sector alone provided around 11.3 million jobs worldwide in 1995. International tourism is expected to continue to grow just as fast in coming decades, and forecasts indicate that the number of people travelling internationally will increase from 612 million in 1997 to about 1.6 billion by 2020, and that earnings from international tourism will rise from $443 billion in 1997 to more than $2 trillion by 2020.[1]

5. The global tourism sector is currently dominated by industrialized economies from which most of the world's tourism flows originate. However, while tourism demand of persons in many of these economies is levelling off, developing economies — particularly the more dynamic emerging economies — have been experiencing an increase in demand for travel, leading to rapid growth in intraregional travel. The economies of East Asia and the Pacific alone accounted for about 15 per cent of global tourist arrivals and nearly 19 per cent of tourist revenues in 1997, up from 11.2 and 14.6 per cent respectively in 1990.[1] Similarly, in Eastern Europe, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland have benefited from tourism development under a market economy.

6. A significant proportion of international tourism is intraregional in nature, accounting for roughly 82 per cent of the total in 1997. The geographical proximity of tourist destinations to the most important originating markets is an important factor determining successful exports of tourism services, as the cost of air transport represents a smaller share of overall tourism-related expenditure. However, the cost of air travel in general has declined, and this has facilitated the development of tourist packages to long-haul markets in some developing countries. Some of the new destinations, in particular in Asia and the Pacific and in Africa, are attracting higher income tourists and selling higher value-added services and products.[2]

7. Tourism is the only major sector in international trade in services in which developing countries have consistently had surpluses compared with the rest of the world. Between 1980 and 1996 their positive balance in the travel account rose from $4.6 billion to $65.9 billion, driven by the growth of inbound tourism to countries in Asia and the Pacific and in Africa. The distribution of tourism flows shows a high degree of concentration of arrivals and receipts among and within developing regions. In the Asia and Pacific region, for example, Singapore and Hong Kong, Province of China, together received more tourists and earned more from tourism in 1996 than Thailand, Indonesia and South Asia combined. Similarly, Africa, which received nearly three times as many tourist arrivals as Singapore in 1997, managed

to earn only about 8 per cent more from tourism than did Singapore.[1] However, despite the impressive overall expansion of their tourism receipts, developing countries accounted for less than 30 per cent of world tourism receipts in 1996.[2]

8. Although tourism activity consists of both domestic and international tourism, with domestic tourism accounting for approximately 80 per cent of all tourism activity, tourism development strategy typically places the primary emphasis upon international tourists, that is, leisure and business travellers crossing international frontiers. This emphasis on international tourism development, however, is understandable, since domestic tourism leads largely to a redistribution of national income while international tourism provides foreign exchange earnings to the destination country.

9. The tourism sector can be a major driving force for economic development in many developing countries because of its large potential multiplier and spillover effects on the rest of the economy. The sector tends to generate a large number of jobs, particularly of the unskilled or semi-skilled variety. In some developing countries, particularly those lacking adequate resources, tourism may be the only development alternative available in the short to medium term. In this regard, tourism is often identified as a promising growth sector in small island developing States because it offers an important opportunity for economic diversification, particularly for very small islands.

10. In a number of developing countries where tourism development has been given priority in development planning, the contribution of tourism to GNP, employment and export receipts has, in recent years, outstripped traditional economic activities such as cash crop agriculture or mineral extraction. As a result, many developing countries and small island developing States have become more and more dependent on tourism as a major engine for economic development: tourism and tourism-related activities, for instance, now dominate the economies of Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Seychelles. In contrast, island tourism development, in many cases, has had a lesser impact on the economies in most of the African and Pacific small island developing States.

11. The contribution of tourism to income and employment generation can vary significantly between countries. The gross contribution of tourism to national income is diminished by primary leakages of foreign exchange earnings arising from imports of materials and equipment for construction, imports of consumer goods (including food and drink), repatriation of profits earned by foreign investors, overseas promotional expenditures and amortization of external debt incurred in the development of hotels and resorts. In general, income and employment multipliers for tourism tend to be higher in economies where there are well-established local supply networks that ensure that the demands of the tourism sector are more easily met by local suppliers. Where backward linkages between tourism and other sectors of the economy are weak or absent, income and employment multipliers from tourism are lower because the potential stimulus to indirect spending is dissipated by increased imports rather than domestic production, as happens with many small island developing States. Given tourism's potential linkages with other economic sectors, its integration into national development plans that highlight the development of intersectoral linkages can encourage the growth of tourism-related activities in the major economic sectors, including agriculture, fishing, industry, services and transportation.

12. However, overreliance on tourism, especially mass tourism, carries significant risks to tourism-dependent economies. Economic recession and the impacts of natural disasters such as tropical storms and cyclones can have devastating effects on the tourism sector. In general, the demand for mass tourism is relatively income-elastic and can produce sharp negative responses to economic downturns in source markets. The recent financial turmoil in Asia, for example, triggered a sharp fall in tourism flows to affected countries during 1997 and 1998. Similarly, excessive reliance on a single major source of tourists, as in Cyprus and Malta on the United Kingdom market, links the performance of the tourism sector to the economic fortunes of the source country.

A. Economic policy challenges for the tourism industry

13. The private tourism sector, which consists of foreign and domestic enterprises, has a crucial role in tourism development through its investment, production, employment and marketing decisions. The foreign tourism industry consists mainly of large transnational airline, hotel and tour companies, and their corporate objectives can have a profound impact on the economic development of destination areas. Therefore, tourism enterprises should ensure that their investment, employment, operational and other business decisions take full account of the wider implications of such actions for the long-term development

and economic sustainability of the destinations in which they operate.

14. Attention to human resources development and training of local workers, for instance, enhances not only the quality of tourism services but also the overall skills and capabilities of the local workforce. In the same way, the utilization of a network of domestic suppliers by foreign tourism businesses can enhance the development and productivity of local suppliers. The development of such linkages can increase the retention of foreign exchange and thereby raise the contribution of tourism to income growth.

15. The domestic tourism sector is largely made up of small and medium-sized tourism firms, which, unlike large firms, are often family-run businesses. These small and medium enterprises face diverse problems and challenges in adapting themselves to new international trends and need to develop strategies based on various market niches and specific segments that enable them to develop new products. When such firms create their own products they can operate on a more cost-effective basis and yet offer more personalized service because of their greater knowledge of their clients' needs, likes and travelling preferences. However, in order to do this, small and medium enterprises require proper planning and market research to redefine and adjust marketing strategies for selling their products. Moreover, those businesses, particularly travel agencies, need to keep abreast of advances in informatics in order to compete successfully with large domestic and foreign tourism enterprises.

B. Economic policy challenges for national Governments

16. In order to advance tourism development, national Governments need to implement policies that will encourage the domestic tourism industry and attract foreign direct investment and relevant technologies. Those policies should ensure that tourism is properly planned and managed so as to minimize its adverse economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts. Therefore, appropriate attention and priority should be attached to tourism in development planning in order to integrate and coordinate tourism policies with the policies of other government agencies so that tourism develops in harmony with overall economic, social and environmental goals. Governments should also consult widely with host communities and concerned major groups to ensure that as broad a range of views as possible is incorporated into the planning process of tourism development. It is also important, in this regard, that Governments undertake capacity-building to promote partnerships and enhance dialogue with all major groups in society.

17. In order to promote tourism and successfully compete with other countries, Governments should ensure that their immigration regulations facilitate the inflow of tourists and people involved in supplying tourism services. In addition, market liberalization and the promotion of consumer (tourist) interests, such as safety and facilitation of travel and the easing of foreign currency regulations, should be key areas of attention for Governments. Indeed, liberalization will lead to greater travel exchange between countries.

18. For most developing countries and economies in transition, foreign direct investment is important for tourism development as it provides an important source of capital, new technologies, organization and management methods and access to markets. Such investment can be attracted and maintained by a stable policy environment that promotes confidence among foreign investors in the economy. To promote the tourism industries, Governments should review the fiscal treatment of the tourism sector and undertake necessary fiscal reform to foster its growth and development. It is also important that Governments develop and apply effective competition policy in the tourism and related sectors by, *inter alia*, prohibiting anti-competitive clauses such as exclusive dealing, import requirements in franchising contracts and the abuse of dominance in air travel.

19. The lack of an adequate tourism infrastructure is a serious obstacle to tourism development in all countries. In particular, the long planning and construction time involved in infrastructure development, as well as the difficulties of funding very costly infrastructure projects, can create critical bottlenecks for international travel and tourism growth. When undertaking the development of major infrastructures, such as road networks or water supply systems, national Governments have to ensure that they cater not only to the needs of the tourism sector, but also to the needs of other industries in the area, as well as to the local community as a whole. Developing countries should consider the various options available for financing tourism infrastructure projects, such as government outlays, financing by multilateral and regional financial institutions, involvement of the private sector through build-operate-transfer schemes and foreign direct investment. The privatization of infrastructure development has been undertaken successfully in a number of developing countries, including Malaysia and Thailand.

20. Given the importance of small and medium enterprises in the tourism industry of both developed and developing countries, it is crucial that policy reforms address this source of entrepreneurial potential. For example, policies should be implemented to promote the access of such enterprises to finance and to strengthen the provision of industrial support services. Moreover, investment policies should encourage linkages among small and medium enterprises. Also, Governments should provide tax incentives and implement deregulation to promote the development and competitiveness of such enterprises in the tourism industry.

21. It is important that the economic benefits of tourism be distributed widely among the host population. One way to do this is to encourage tourism businesses to employ local people and to limit the employment of expatriate labour. In this regard, tourism businesses should be encouraged to train local personnel.

22. Often, employment in the tourism sector is affected by the seasonal pattern of tourism activity that characterizes many destinations that are heavily dependent on tourism: typically there is underutilization of resources (and lower employment opportunities) during the low season and overutilization of resources during the high season. The challenge for national Governments is to identify ways in which tourism activity can be spread more evenly throughout the year. In this regard there is also scope for national Governments to assist tourism organizations of all kinds in assessing and responding to the changing nature of the international demand for tourism, for example by developing alternative forms of tourism.

23. Governments should pay special attention to tourism development and management in coastal areas, which have often relied on tourism as a major source of income and employment. Many such areas are now facing a decline in their established markets. In many instances, a factor contributing to their declining fortunes is poorly planned and poorly managed tourism development in the past, which have impaired the attractiveness of the destination. Coastal tourism is particularly vulnerable in this respect, as it typically involves some of the world's most fragile ecological areas. Since tourism plays a significant role in most small island developing State economies, their national Governments face special challenges to ensure that there is a balance between the heightened demands placed on local resources by tourism and the demands placed upon them by other economic activities and by host communities. To the extent possible, small island developing States and other developing countries should strive to diversify their national economy in order to reduce dependency on tourism as a source of income, employment and foreign exchange earnings.

C. Economic policy challenges for the international community

24. In view of the projected rapid growth in international tourism, there is a need for concerted international action. If the economic benefits of tourism are to be experienced more widely throughout the world, it is important to explore ways to increase participation in international travel, especially by those living in developing countries. This should involve efforts to reduce or even remove tariff-like barriers to international travel. For example, differential exit taxes on residents and visitors serve to discourage foreign travel by residents, while travel allowance restrictions not only discourage foreign travel but also limit residents' spending potential while abroad.

25. Further liberalization commitments on trade in tourism should be negotiated under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and an annex on tourism services may be required, comprising, *inter alia*, regulatory issues such as definitions, competitive safeguards, access to information, fair and transparent use of global distribution systems, linkages between tourism and air transport and security conditions for service contracts. Furthermore, the relevant provisions of GATS should be fully implemented, or, if necessary, new provisions should be developed, to prevent unfair competition arising from discriminatory practices in the issuance of visas to tourists that favour certain tour operators and travel agents. Articles IV and XIX of GATS should be effectively applied to the tourism sector through the adoption of measures that foster greater participation by developing countries in international trade in tourism services. The problems of air access of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, need to be addressed with a view to securing a fair treatment of those countries. Technical assistance should be provided to developing countries, in particular least developed countries, both at the governmental and business levels, in preparing for negotiations in such forums relating to trade and development in tourism and related services.[3]

26. International organizations and donor countries should also increase their efforts in training and capacity-building in the field of tourism in developing countries, including the effective use of computer reservation systems, global distribution systems and the Internet to maximize their earnings from tourism and to meet international standards. Studies should be carried out on specific issues of interest

to developing countries, such as leakages of foreign exchange earnings from the tourism sector, the impact of all-inclusive tours on the financial sustainability of the tourism sector in developing countries and the development of a model strategy for integrating local communities into the formulation, implementation and management of tourism projects.

27. In the area of infrastructure development, the international community already plays an important role by providing funding for tourism-related projects. These funding agencies include, for example, the various World Bank affiliates and United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme. Other international organizations, including the World Trade Organization, are often involved as executing agencies for the provision of technical assistance. Multilateral and regional financing institutions should give high priority to appropriate strategies for the environmentally and financially sustainable development of tourism and related sectors, in particular for financing infrastructure projects, the provision of modern telecommunications services under pro-competitive regulatory regimes and human resource development activities.

28. There are problems with the measurement of tourism activity that limit regional and world aggregations and make international comparability difficult: there is no universally accepted definition, although there are internationally recognized definitions of the various categories of tourists. In this regard, national tourism agencies and the statistical offices of all countries should adopt the definitions on tourism statistics as approved by the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1993. In Addition, there is no agreed way of measuring the output from and impacts of tourism and its relationships with other economic sectors. Some progress will be made in this respect when the draft of a tourism satellite account is tabled at the World Conference on the Measurement of the Economic Impact of Tourism, to be convened in 1999. Countries should support this initiative, as the acceptance and implementation of a uniform system of tourism accounting measures would provide a clear measurement of the role of the tourism sector in economic development and trade. Such a system could then be used in international negotiations on services, for which adequate statistics and policy analysis are a necessary prerequisite.

III. Tourism and social development

29. International tourism can introduce significant social and cultural change in host destinations. While it is acknowledged that economic development is, in itself, an important change agent in society, the role of tourism has received special attention in this regard largely because of the high visibility of tourists and their direct economic, social and cultural interactions with host communities. Tourism can promote social development through its impact on employment creation, income redistribution and poverty alleviation. Also, the improvements in physical and social infrastructure that usually accompany tourism development often spill over into the rest of the economy, leading to more widespread social improvements, for example, in health and social welfare.

30. At the same time, tourism development can promote negative social and cultural change as a result of economic development or a social demonstration effect when local residents imitate what foreign visitors do, wear and eat. For example, employment that requires shift work can disrupt family life and religious observance. Other negative social costs, such as drug abuse, child labour and prostitution, not only have an impact on the local population, but may also damage the image of the destination itself. However, it is important to note that many negative social changes often attributed to tourism could just as easily have been the result of modernization, in particular the development and diffusion of media and mass communications.

31. In many instances, much of the impact of tourism activity is localized: host communities suffer the effects of overcrowding, pressure on resources and challenges to established culture, including negative changes in the patterns of religious observance, dress, behavioural norms and traditions from interaction with non-indigenous cultures. The intensity of these social impacts depends on factors such as the type and rate of tourism growth, the ratio of visitors to the resident community, seasonal trends and the sociocultural resilience of the host community, but may be magnified in locations where tourist arrival numbers have increased rapidly or where the ratio of tourist arrivals to local population is high. In general, such social costs and pressures may be less onerous when residents actually receive economic and financial benefits from local tourism activity. In the absence of such recompense, host communities may resent and possibly turn hostile towards tourists.

32. A high level of tourism activity can unwittingly encourage over-commercialization, which can cheapen or even destroy local customs and traditions. For instance, when local arts and crafts and cultural practices are adapted to suit foreign tastes, the result can be poor quality handicrafts, unethical trading practices and fake "antiques", as well as the deterioration of cultural dances, music and festivals. Cultural deterioration of a more serious nature may occur when historic sites and buildings are unprotected and the traditionally built environment is replaced or virtually disappears.

33. To mitigate these social and cultural costs, an important consideration in sustainable tourism development is the tourist carrying capacity of host destinations in both environmental and social terms. The concept of carrying capacity should adequately reflect the ability of a local community to absorb tourists without submerging or overwhelming the local culture. This is usually a difficult balance to achieve, but without careful consideration of the sociocultural carrying capacity of a community or area, irretrievable cultural deterioration and loss of cultural patrimony may result; ironically, the very success that national tourism agencies achieve in increasing visitor numbers can actually induce long-term problems that diminish the sustainability of tourist destinations.

34. However, tourism development can help host communities to reclaim their cultural patrimony by providing them with the necessary financial incentives to invest in, promote and preserve their local customs and cultures. With proper management and promotion, local cultures can be given an impetus by the presence of tourists. In many host countries, tourism development has contributed to the revival of native crafts and festivals, which can promote traditional handicraft industries and provide enhanced employment opportunities, particularly for women.

A. Social policy challenges for the tourism industry

35. The major challenge facing the tourism industry is to contribute to social development objectives through greater compliance with core labour standards, attention to worker welfare and human resource development and more corporate social initiatives. Although Governments can and do legislate on matters such as health and safety at work, health insurance and pensions, minimum wages and employment of women and young people, the tourism industry needs to address these issues and take concrete steps, be it in the form of better compliance or voluntary initiatives, to ensure that workers and host communities receive social as well as economic benefits from tourism development. In this regard, the tourism industry needs to ensure that special attention is given to those issues that are specific to or are more pronounced in the tourism sector.

36. Over the past two decades, tourism has become a major source of employment and income in many developing countries. The evidence indicates that in both developed and developing countries, most workers in the tourism industry are in either unskilled or low-skilled jobs, which offer low wages, seasonal employment and irregular working hours. The tourism industry needs to address how working conditions can be improved to provide greater job security and improved human resource development. Clearly, discussion on conditions of work should involve a more direct dialogue between employers and employee representatives, and there should be a greater role for employees in the formulation and implementation of company policies. The private sector and workers' organizations should support the International Labour Organization process of tripartite cooperation as a means of promoting the participation of employers' and workers' organizations.

37. Another significant feature of employment in the tourism sector is the high proportion of women and young people in the workforce. In many situations, women and children can be seriously disadvantaged, discriminated against or exploited in the workplace. In particular, sex tourism, prostitution (with the related problem of HIV/AIDS) and child labour (including the commercial sexual exploitation of children) are issues of serious concern.

38. Tourism enterprises should take steps to put an immediate stop to intolerable forms of child labour. One way to do this is to develop codes of conduct among enterprises in order to prevent child labour and promote compliance with national legislation on child labour. Since poverty is a major factor determining child labour and exploitation, tourism enterprises should support activities that provide employable skills to children at an employable age and to their families, and implement innovative programmes to ensure adequate and full employment of breadwinners. Within their organizations they can also implement responsible tourism marketing and advertisement and create awareness among tourism personnel on the rights of women and children.

39. To its credit, the tourism industry has taken important first steps to confront these serious problems. With regard to child labour and sex tourism, for example, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions launched

a global campaign in 1994 to eliminate child labour, while the International Organization of Employers in 1996 resolved to end slave-like, bonded and dangerous forms of child labour and to develop suitable action plans at the international, national, industry and enterprise levels. In addition, tourist agencies, hotels and air carriers are beginning to take direct action against sex tourism: the Universal Federation of Travel Agents' Associations, for example, has committed itself to combating child sex tourism with the adoption of its Child and Travel Agent Charter in 1994. The World Tourism Organization established the Tourism and Child Prostitution Watch in 1996 to encourage self-regulation in the tourism industry by increasing awareness of the problems of sexual exploitation in tourism and by collecting information on sex tourism and measures that have been successful in stopping it.

40. The tourism industry also has to address the concerns of communities in which they carry out their businesses. Given the potential social and cultural impact of tourism on local populations, particularly in the more remote and isolated locations favoured by the newer forms of tourism such as nature or ecotourism, the private sector needs to invite and nurture host community participation in the tourism development process. Without host community acceptance of the type and scale of tourism, antagonism towards tourists and tourism can threaten overall development and sustainability objectives.

41. Tourism enterprises can also play a useful role in the promotion of education to both tourists and the host community to improve cultural awareness in order to minimize the social impact of tourism. Airlines, for example, have the opportunity, through in-flight videos and publications, to inform passengers about the cultural sensitivities of host communities. Moreover, the tourism industry can play an important role in raising awareness among tourists about the serious issues of child labour, particularly their commercial sexual exploitation. The tourism industry already possesses codes of conduct that provide guidelines for tourism enterprises and host communities, which should be more widely adopted and applied.

B. Social policy challenges for national Governments

42. Governments have an important role in maximizing the benefits of tourism and limiting its negative impacts on society. As such, they have to direct their policies towards development of human resources, alleviation of poverty, improvement of social security, correction of gender and income disparities and promotion of core labour standards. Towards this end, a coordinated policy approach involving Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions, host communities and international agencies is necessary to guarantee the achievement of social development objectives through tourism development.

43. The employment created through tourism development can play a significant role in the alleviation of poverty, and government efforts to stimulate employment growth must emphasize the development of linkages between the tourism sector and the local support industries. Since many of the local tourism firms are likely to be small enterprises, Governments should ensure that their policy and regulatory environments support small and medium enterprises by improving their access to markets, sources of information, training and credit. In this regard, due consideration should also be given to providing economic and social opportunities for wider participation and, wherever possible and acceptable, dispersing tourism activities to outlying areas in order to increase rural incomes. Attention should also be directed to the seasonal nature of employment in many tourist destinations with the aim of creating alternative employment opportunities during the low season, including the provision of job security and social safety nets.

44. Among the social problems related to tourism development in developing countries are the lack of indigenous senior managers and the preponderance of low-skilled or unskilled employment in the tourism sector. One way to address these problems is for national Governments to work in partnership with the tourism industry and civil society to strengthen secondary, vocational and advanced education to ensure that the developmental needs of society as well as the specific needs of the tourism sector are met.

45. It is crucial that tourism development planning preserve the legacy, heritage and integrity of tourism destinations and respect the social and cultural norms of society, particularly among the indigenous communities. To this end, there is a need to control the rate of growth of the tourism sector where it may jeopardize local communities and social values. The point of contact between visitor and host is potentially the most important source of negative social and cultural impacts, and it is necessary to try to eradicate potential areas of misunderstanding and friction. Some of the major pressures on the sociocultural fabric of host economies occur when the growth in visitor arrivals is too rapid and when there is unrestricted access to culturally fragile areas. Therefore, there is a significant role for the local community in deciding what it is prepared to offer, how

its cultural patrimony is to be presented and which, if any, aspects of the culture are off-limits to visitors.

46. In this regard, tourism community awareness campaigns are now generally being advocated in tourism development planning to inform people of the benefits to be gained from tourism development. Informing the community should be a continuing process and should be a responsibility of the national tourism agencies, private sector associations and community representatives. In order to stimulate cultural awareness, Governments should work closely with communities and the private sector to ensure that available funding for tourism development is used effectively and efficiently. Therefore, there should be support for greater involvement of communities in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes of tourism policies, programmes and projects. Feelings of alienation and exploitation may arise where local communities are not involved in tourism development planning.

47. Ultimately, community participation has to be linked to community benefits. Without the transference of some of the benefits from tourism to local communities through the creation of jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities and social benefits, efforts to promote community participation may be ineffective. The Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources project in Zimbabwe and the Administrative Management Design for Game Management Areas project in Zambia are good illustrations of how community involvement in tourism — in this case in anti-poaching activities — has provided financial benefits and incentives to the participating communities while promoting environmentally sustainable tourism. The game management project actively involves local communities in conservation and reinvests money raised from park entry and safari fees in community development and local wildlife management.

48. More needs to be done to spread the lessons and examples of good business practices in the tourism sector and to provide incentives that contribute to social development. Governments should encourage the wider use of voluntary initiatives on the part of industry in both the formal and informal sectors. Indeed, these voluntary initiatives reflect growing corporate recognition and commitment to its social responsibilities.

C. Social policy challenges for the international community

49. The international community faces the challenge of promoting the interests of both host communities and tourists. International cooperation to advance social development objectives in the tourism sector should be built on the foundations established at the World Summit for Social Development and countries' commitments expressed in the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development.[4] The tourism sector, which is forecast to provide rapid growth in productive employment over the next two decades, can be a major contributor to the achievement of many of these goals for social development if it complies with core standards and other standards related to working conditions, occupational safety and health and social security.

50. At the same time, the international efforts to encourage the observance of these standards should go hand in hand with appropriate technical and financial assistance to countries at lower levels of development that are striving to benefit more fully from rapidly growing tourism. In order to enable these countries to develop competitive tourism sectors without compromising on labour standards, technical cooperation may be required to help tourism firms and small enterprises, particularly in low-income countries, attain this goal.

51. The international community can enhance and strengthen international coordination and monitoring systems through liaison and networking among Governments, the private sector and concerned parties with a view to promoting the positive aspects and minimizing the negative impacts of tourism. In this regard, the Manila Declaration on Social Aspects of Tourism, issued in 1997, will be of great relevance and can provide the basis for international action and cooperation. National Governments, together with the private sector and stakeholders, should be encouraged to work towards the formulation and eventual adoption of a global code of ethics for tourism as recommended in the Manila Declaration. Tourism development in small island developing States and coastal areas should continue to receive special international support. In the case of small island developing States, there should be continued international support for activities pertaining to sustainable tourism under the Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States.

52. The international community should further mobilize international support to prevent and control tourism-related abuse and exploitation of people, particularly women and children and other disadvantaged groups. The World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in 1996, adopted a programme of action designed to contribute to the global effort to suppress child sex exploitation. In 1997, the Amsterdam Child Labour Conference issued the Amsterdam Declaration, which addressed the most intolerable forms of child labour, while in the same year the International Conference on Child Labour issued the Oslo Declaration, which addressed the issue of practical action to eliminate child labour. Governments, the tourism industry, trade unions and stakeholders should support these international efforts to end such practices in the tourism sector.

IV. Tourism and environmental protection

53. The projected sustained growth of the tourism industry will present serious challenges to environmental protection. In general, the tourism industry produces adverse environmental impacts through its consumption of resources, the pollution and waste generated by the development of tourism infrastructure and facilities, transportation and tourist activities. In the absence of proper planning and management, tourism development can create strong competition for the use of land between tourism and other competing uses, leading to rising prices for land and increased pressure to build on agricultural land. Furthermore, indiscriminate tourism development can encourage intensive or inappropriate use of land, which can cause deforestation, soil erosion and loss of biological diversity. Intensive human interference with vegetation and wildlife through tourism can undermine or destroy traditional activities such as fishing and, perhaps more importantly, cause irreversible damage to valuable ecosystems. The growing market for ecotourism or nature tourism is another area of concern. If not properly planned and managed, such new forms of tourism can threaten the world's most ecologically fragile areas, including parks and natural world heritage sites. Important sustainability considerations also arise from tourism's use of the built environment, for example through "heritage tourism", which can cause, *inter alia*, urban problems such as traffic congestion experienced by many historical city centres.

54. Coastal area development for tourism is an issue of particular concern. The unchecked construction of tourism facilities can despoil the pristine beauty of these areas and erosion from tourism facilities and infrastructures built too close to the coast can contribute to beach destruction and coastal degradation. Practices such as intensive sand mining for tourism-related construction — a feature of many coastal areas — have been responsible for beach destruction; in coastal areas where coral reefs have been destroyed by sewage and other pollution such beach destruction is unlikely to be replenished naturally.

55. The treatment and disposal of liquid and solid wastes generated by the tourism industry is another serious problem, particularly for less developed economies that lack the physical infrastructure or capacity to treat the additional wastes generated by tourism activities. In the Caribbean, the growing frequency of tourist cruise ships is generating increasing volumes of liquid and solid wastes for disposal at the ports of call. Where untreated effluents are disposed into surrounding areas of land and sea, the result often is the pollution of scarce inland freshwater resources, the loss of valuable marine life, the destruction of coral reefs and the silting and erosion of coastal beaches. Pollution from ship-generated wastes is a major concern for small island developing States, where the dumping of oily waste, sewage, garbage and cargo residues by passing cruise and merchant ships can cause marine and beach pollution.

56. Fresh water remains a pressing concern, and the provision of fresh water to meet growing demand from agriculture, industry and households is becoming increasingly difficult in more and more economies. The tourism industry is an extremely intensive user of fresh water and, as the industry expands globally, the problem of freshwater supply is likely to worsen. Moreover, this situation is compounded in many areas where water pollution not only damages tourism sites but also contaminates the freshwater supply. In addition, air pollution is likely to worsen at the local and global levels from increased carbon dioxide emissions related to energy use in tourism-related transportation and in air-conditioning and heating of tourism facilities.

57. Ironically, damage to the environment threatens the very viability of the tourism industry because it depends heavily on the natural environment — its beaches and mountains, rivers, forests and biodiversity — as a basic resource. For example, island tourism is climate-sensitive and is vulnerable to a rise in the sea level that would cause the inundation of coastal and some inland areas, threatening sanitation systems and freshwater supplies. The attractiveness of certain locations as tourist destinations has also been affected by damage to the natural landscape and the loss of biodiversity linked to human activities. Local air

and noise pollution linked to urban congestion can also serve to deter tourists from visiting some destinations.

58. However, tourism can also significantly contribute to environmental protection, the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. For example, the tourism industry can protect and rehabilitate its natural assets, such as parks, protected areas and cultural and natural sites, by its financial contributions, provision of environmental infrastructure and improved environmental management. Tourism can also help to raise the awareness of the local population to the financial and intrinsic value of natural and cultural sites, motivating communities to reclaim their natural and cultural patrimony through environmental protection and conservation.

A. Environmental policy challenges for the tourism industry

59. The central challenge for the tourism industry is to transform itself, in all its forms, into a sustainable activity by reorienting corporate philosophy, practice and ethics to promote sustainable development through, *inter alia*, better environmental management and practices and close partnerships with Government and civil society.

60. It is vital that the tourism industry involve all stakeholders — customers, staff, trading partners and the host community — in decision-making. To this end, it should develop partnerships with the host community, Governments and their agencies, other private sector companies and international organizations in order to enhance the prospects for bringing about the sustainable development of tourism.

61. Tourism enterprises, both large and small, should integrate environmental management systems and procedures into all aspects of corporate activity in order to reorient their management at all levels towards sustainable development. This fundamental reorientation of management philosophy and practice will necessitate the implementation of, *inter alia*, environmental and social audits, life cycle assessments and training of staff in the principles and practices of sustainable tourism management. In terms of operational changes, tourism enterprises should take all appropriate measures to minimize all forms of waste, conserve energy and freshwater resources and control harmful emissions to the environment. Furthermore, tourism enterprises should plan and manage their operations to minimize the potential environmental impacts from tourism development, such as using local materials and technologies appropriate to local conditions. The tourism industry should promote wider implementation of environmental management, particularly in the many small and medium-sized enterprises that form the backbone of the tourism industry.

62. The tourism industry, by modifying the products it develops and offers the public, can directly influence the nature of tourism itself towards sustainable forms of tourism. In this regard, marketing is an important tool in the tourism industry that should be used to enhance the industry's initiatives for promoting sustainable development by, *inter alia*, raising awareness among their clients of the potential environmental and social impacts of their holidays and of responsible behaviour. The tourism industry is also increasingly interested in eco-labels as a means of promoting their facilities and destinations. But even within existing forms of tourism, businesses in the tourism industry can change their methods of production and delivery to achieve this end. In general, businesses in the tourism sector have a vested interest in maintaining the environmental and sociocultural resources of destination areas that represent their core business assets. Therefore, sustainability of tourism is a challenge to all tourism enterprises, regardless of their size or market orientation, and is not limited to certain niche markets such as ecotourism.

63. An important way in which tourism can achieve the target of sustainability is through self-regulation and voluntary initiatives. In response to the call for action on environmental protection, the tourism industry has developed a number of environmental codes of conduct and voluntary initiatives. In this regard, the environmental guidelines developed by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) is especially relevant for the attainment of sustainability in the tourism industry. Furthermore, a number of innovative programmes and industry awards have been introduced with the aim of promoting and improving environmental management and practices in the tourism industry.

64. WTTC, for example, conducts an environmental management programme for travel and tourism companies and tourism destinations called Green Globe. Launched in 1994, this programme aspires to raise the level of environmental awareness and to provide a low-cost practical means for companies within the industry to undertake improvements in environmental practice. Members of the programme are committed at the chief executive officer level to improving environmental practice in priority action areas through their adherence to Green Globe or equivalent industry guidelines. The programme also bestows annual achievement awards on member companies that demonstrate

outstanding commitment to improving environmental practices. Green Globe members can also earn a certificate of performance based on independent verification of improvements in environmental practice through the Société Générale de Surveillance S.A.

65. Another innovative programme is the International Hotel Environment Initiative (IHEI), established in 1992 by the Prince of Wales Business Leaders Forum to promote environmental management in the hotel industry. Led by a council of 12 of the top hotel companies in the world, IHEI promotes the business benefits of environmental management within the international hotel community, develops hotel-specific environmental training materials, publishes a quarterly magazine, *Green Hotelier*, dedicated to environmental issues and promotes greater awareness of IHEI "best practice" programmes. A local chapter, the Asia Pacific Hotels Environment Initiative, operates in the Asia-Pacific region. IHEI is developing guidelines for the siting and design of hotels.

66. The Blue Flag programme, which now extends to 18 countries in Europe, was first conceived in France in 1985 as an incentive to protect and improve the quality of beaches and coasts. Under this programme, environmental standards are assessed at individual beaches in Europe by measuring compliance with acceptable concentrations of a range of pollutants on beaches and in marinas to ensure clean bathing water. Beaches are also judged by their compliance with guidelines pertaining to litter management, toilet facilities, life-saving and first-aid equipment, the separation of different recreational activities from each other and from sensitive natural areas, as well as environmental education and activities. Beaches that meet these stringent criteria receive Blue Flag awards that attest to the quality of their maintenance and environmental protection. The success of the programme has inspired the Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Tourism Organization, to extend the award to non-European countries as well.

67. Despite the well-intentioned and noteworthy initiatives of the tourism industry to improve its standards of environmental management and protection, there is plenty of room for additional efforts. In particular, if the codes of conduct and voluntary initiatives are to achieve their full impact on environmental protection, the tourism industry must act to ensure that those instruments are adopted and implemented by all tourism enterprises. Furthermore, these industry initiatives need to be monitored, assessed and reported to reflect their progress in attaining the objectives of sustainable development in general and of environmental protection in particular.

B. Environmental policy challenges for national Governments

68. Governments face the challenge of promoting tourism development in a manner that will maximize the positive influence of tourism on economic and social development as well as environmental objectives, while minimizing its negative impact on the natural environment. An appropriate balance needs to be established between the goals of sustainable tourism development and environmental protection; in particular, the development of sustainable tourism should not impede or diminish sustainability in other sectors of the economy nor, by the same token, should unsustainable practices in related economic sectors (such as agriculture or mineral extraction) limit the potential for tourism to become more sustainable. In order to achieve this, high priority should be assigned to the integration of policies for tourism development with environmental protection. Within this integrated policy framework, it will be necessary for regulatory policies and systems of economic incentives and disincentives to be reviewed to ensure that clear environmental goals and objectives are set for the tourism industry. Policy makers should also address the need for capacity-building as well as environmental monitoring and data collection to support the efforts of the tourism industry and civil society to improve environmental protection.

69. The quest for sustainable tourism will require change on the part of all major groups involved in tourism. Therefore, the overarching objective for national Governments must be to develop policy frameworks that will enable and encourage those changes. In this regard, an important area of action for Governments is to develop national strategies or master plans for tourism that will provide focus and direction to all stakeholders. These strategies and master plans need to be complemented and supported by appropriate regulatory mechanisms and tools to deal with environmental assessment, building regulations and environmental standards for tourism. Governments should ensure that all environmental regulations and environmental policy measures are applied to all businesses in the tourism sector, regardless of size or type of tourism activity. It is important that all Governments that have not already done so give due consideration to the ratification and implementation of international and regional environmental conventions, particularly those relating to tourism activities.

70. Tourism, in particular mass tourism, should be regulated and, where necessary, prohibited in ecologically and culturally sensitive areas. Also, in protected areas and where nature is particularly diverse, vulnerable and attractive, tourism should be permitted only when it meets the requirements of nature protection and biological diversity conservation. In coastal areas where tourism can impose serious environmental damage, Governments should fully implement the principles of integrated coastal area management. Environmental impact studies are an important tool for sustainable development and should be undertaken in the preoperative stage. However, where tourism activities can contribute to environmental conservation, they should be encouraged and promoted.

71. The continued strong growth in tourism is expected to increase the volume of travel related to tourism in all forms. A major environmental implication of this trend is that, if unchecked, it will lead to increases in the level of emissions, waste and pollution resulting from tourism-related transportation. In particular, Governments should pay special attention to negative environmental impacts of road and air traffic and take steps to ensure that tourism development incorporates environmentally friendly modes of transport. In this regard, a mix of economic, technological and management approaches may be useful. For instance, consumption patterns can be influenced through appropriate marketing, pricing and consumer education, or new forms of tourism can be developed.

72. The use of economic instruments to promote sustainable tourism should be extended further. It is clear that environmental performance in the tourism industry can be improved by a judicious mix of instruments, comprising both incentives and direct regulation, that facilitate innovation and complement economic policies. In general, existing economic incentives that encourage environmentally unfriendly activities should be removed. The full costing and pricing of energy and water, in particular, can promote eco-efficiency in the tourism industry as well as provide additional revenue that can be used to support improved management of those resources. In this regard, the user-pays principle is appropriate and should be more widely applied and supported. The role of the banking and insurance sectors in sustainable tourism should be developed and encouraged. In particular, banks and insurance companies can promote sustainable tourism by advocating policies that incorporate environmental and social criteria into assessment procedures for loans, investments and insurance. They could help finance environmentally sound technologies and provide incentives for sustainable tourism.

73. The promotion of partnerships among all stakeholders is vital to the attainment of sustainable tourism, and Governments can play an important role by encouraging, supporting and facilitating the involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, especially indigenous and local communities, in the planning, development and management of tourism. The development of such participatory approaches can also encourage and promote responsible practices among businesses, host communities and tourists, for example, through the development of codes of conduct, guidelines and voluntary initiatives in support of sustainable development.

74. It is important to raise public awareness about sustainable tourism and to encourage more responsible behaviour. Often, if tourists are given opportunities to learn about the culture and environment of the host community prior to their visit, they behave more responsibly. Local communities and businesses also benefit from awareness-raising activities that alert them to the environmental impact of their activities and interactions with tourists. It is important, therefore, to ensure that sustainability issues are fully integrated into courses at all levels of education in order to develop environmental awareness and the skills required to promote sustainable tourism. In order to ensure that sustainable tourism becomes the concern of the whole industry, it is necessary for Governments to work in partnership with the tourism industry to develop training programmes and networks to exchange training materials dealing with environmental protection. In addition, non-governmental organizations have made important contributions to raising community awareness of environmental and sustainability issues, and such activities should be supported.

75. In view of the fact that many tourism activities and their impacts are highly localized, it is necessary to promote capacity-building among local government entities. Already, in many countries local governments have important responsibilities for tourism development and management, and capacity-building programmes will enable them to better understand these responsibilities with respect to sustainable tourism.

76. There is a need to improve the monitoring and reporting of industry's progress towards the objective of sustainable tourism. The Government should encourage the tourism industry to use participatory approaches involving all stakeholders to develop the monitoring and public reporting of its activities, particularly with regard to their compliance with unenforceable codes of conduct and voluntary initiatives. At the same time, local and central governments should enhance their capacity to monitor the

performance of the tourism industry and to develop suitable indicators that can be used in their decision-making.

77. Governments should fully support and promote the voluntary initiatives of the tourism industry and encourage the dissemination of best practices within the business and local community. Incentives, including the award of prizes, certificates and eco-labels for sustainable tourism, should be used to encourage the private sector to meet its responsibilities for achieving sustainable tourism. The success of the Blue Flag programme in Europe is a good example of the practical contribution of such an approach.

C. Environmental policy challenges for the international community

78. The major challenge facing the international community is to assist Governments, especially those of developing countries, to promote tourism development within the framework of sustainable development in order to maximize the potential economic and social benefits from tourism without damaging the environment or cultural assets.

79. The predicted growth in international tourism raises fresh concerns about the impact of tourism development on the environment. In the absence of adequate measures, it is likely that the projected increase in the volume of international tourism will generate outcomes, such as increases in air, sea and land transportation, that can harm the environment. Thus, the major challenges facing the international community are to deal with the negative transboundary and global impacts of tourism on the environment and to support the efforts of countries, particularly developing countries, to improve the environmental sustainability of their tourism industries at the national level. Therefore, policy coordination and cooperation at the international level is needed to address the global environmental impacts of tourism, as well as issues of biological diversity, coastal area management and ecotourism.

80. The international community has already taken important steps through the development of international, regional and multilateral agreements and guidelines that address the issue of sustainable tourism. However, these now need to be effectively translated into practical programmes for implementation by the tourism industry, Governments and civil society. Of particular importance to the environmental sustainability of tourism are the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Berlin Declaration on Biological Diversity and Sustainable Tourism, the Malé Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development, the Declaration of San José, the Charter for Sustainable Tourism, the World Heritage Convention and *Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry*.[5] Furthermore, at the regional level, it is important to take account of the recommendations on the sustainable development of tourism in the eastern African States and the Council of Europe's recommendations on a general policy for sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism development. In addition, there is ongoing work to develop global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism in the Convention on Biological Diversity, and principles for the implementation of sustainable tourism in UNEP. In this regard, the international community has an important role to play in developing a set of internationally recognized reporting standards as well as external monitoring and accreditation systems for assessing the sustainability of tourism services.

81. The international community also has an important role in assisting developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, economies in transition and small island developing States, through the provision of financial and technical assistance to governments at all levels, to develop a range of meaningful and effective planning guidelines, codes of good practice, regulatory frameworks and policy provisions aimed at achieving sustainable tourism. Such assistance is crucial, *inter alia*, for the development of integrated national tourism policies and master plans, capacity-building, development of tourism infrastructure and the promotion of sustainable planning and management of tourism. It should also be used to develop techniques and frameworks for assessing the environmental and social impacts of tourism at the national, regional and local levels, and to promote the use of integrated environmental management and social responsibility programmes for sustainable tourism. At the same time, the international community should support the development of inventories of tourism activities and attractions that take into account the impact of tourism on ecosystems and biological diversity. In this regard, technical and scientific cooperation should be established through the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention on Biodiversity.

82. A further challenge for the international community is to help countries, especially developing countries, to progressively raise environmental standards and to adopt technologies that enhance environmental protection without unduly reducing the international competitive position of tourism enterprises. In this regard, tourism activities that employ environmentally sound technologies to save water and energy, prevent pollution, treat waste water, minimize solid waste production and encourage recycling should be

promoted to the fullest extent. Similarly, tourism activities that encourage the use of public and non-motorized transport should be supported. The international community will have to strengthen development cooperation to make tourism development more environmentally sustainable, while emphasizing financial support and measures to accelerate the transfer of environmentally sound technology. Steps should be taken to facilitate the international exchange of information, experience and technical skills, especially between the developed and developing countries.

83. Regional cooperation is an important modality for promoting the development of sustainable tourism and should be supported because it opens up opportunities for regional collaboration in such areas as tourism development planning, market development and promotion, strengthening and expansion of the roles of national and regional tourism institutions and organs and training and manpower development. In recent years, various efforts have been made to forge common regional approaches to the promotion of sustainable tourism development. For example, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has endorsed a plan of action for sustainable tourism development in the Asia and Pacific region. The Tourism Council of the South Pacific has been successful as a regional agency in the area of marketing and promotion of the South Pacific as a tourist destination, while for the Caribbean small island developing States, the formation of the Caribbean Coalition for Tourism has pooled resources for cooperative marketing.

84. International organizations, in particular UNEP and the World Tourism Organization, have been important in promoting action to deal with the environmental impacts of tourism and to promote sustainable tourism. UNEP has developed fruitful partnerships with industry associations at the international level to provide information about and disseminate examples of good environmental practices, in particular on codes of conduct and environment management of hotels. In 1997, the World Trade Organization convened the Asia-Pacific Ministers' Conference on Tourism and Environment and the World Tourism Leaders' Meeting on the Social Impacts of Tourism. The international community should support the programmes and initiatives of such international organizations designed to promote sustainable tourism.

85. Finally, with regard to the International Year of Ecotourism in 2002, the Commission on Sustainable Development has been requested to recommend to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, supportive measures and activities that will contribute to a successful year (Council resolution 1998/40, para. 3). In order to fulfil this request, it will be necessary for the Commission to initiate and facilitate consultations to discuss the measures and activities that may be undertaken in 2002. The international community and all major groups should fully support and participate in this process to ensure that the event will achieve all its objectives. Furthermore, in view of the fact that the General Assembly, in its resolution 53/24 of 10 November 1998, has also proclaimed the year 2002 as the International Year of Mountains, the Commission for Sustainable Development may wish to consider possibilities for linking some of the activities of the two years.

Notes

[1] World Tourism Organization, *Tourism Highlights 1997* (Madrid, 1998).

[2] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "International trade in tourism-related services: issues and options for developing countries" (TD/B/COM.1/EM.6/2).

[3] United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Report of the Expert Meeting on Strengthening the Capacity for Expanding the Tourism Sector in Developing Countries, with Particular Focus on Tour Operators, Travel Agencies and Other Suppliers (TD/B/COM.1/17–TD/B/COM.1/EM.6/3).

[4] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[5] World Tourism Organization, World Travel and Tourism Council and Earth Council, *Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry* (1997).

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Tourism and sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Tourism and economic development*

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* The present addendum was prepared by the World Tourism Organization, in accordance with arrangements agreed to by the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development; it is the result of consultation and information exchange between United Nations agencies, international organizations, interested government agencies and a range of other institutions and individuals.

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Introduction

1. Tourism emerged as a global phenomenon in the 1960s. In those early years, the potential for tourism to generate economic development was largely accepted as axiomatic. National Governments looked to tourism as a generator of income, as a means of earning foreign exchange, as a source of employment, and as a means of bringing wider economic benefits to regions with otherwise limited economic potential. Consequently, world tourism expanded largely unrestrained during the 1960s and 1970s. National tourism authorities were established to promote tourism and to ensure that the flow of economic benefits from tourism was maximized.

2. As world tourism continued to expand, however, a disturbing array of social and environmental impacts began to present themselves. These impacts included the modification of indigenous cultures, increases in prostitution and crime, the pollution of sensitive natural areas, and the excessive use of energy and water resources. By the early 1990s, national tourism authorities had generally come to realize that the economic benefits of tourism would not be achievable in the long run unless tourism was properly planned and managed to include an explicit concern for the social and environmental assets upon which its future prosperity depended. The established policy objective of tourism — to stimulate economic development — was therefore widened to include the condition that any such development must also be sustainable in social and environmental terms. In other words, tourism's role in economic development is important but it cannot be considered in a vacuum. The social and environmental implications of tourism development must be integrated into development policy.

3. One way of measuring the importance of tourism in economic development is to examine the share of tourism in national income, employment, export earnings and tax revenues. On this basis, few other traded activities could claim to rival the economic significance of world tourism. Tourism currently contributes about 1.5 per cent of world gross national product (GNP), a little over 8 per cent of world merchandise exports by value and almost 35 per cent of the value of world exports of services. Tourism is also a significant employer, the hotel accommodation sector alone employing about 11.3 million people worldwide.[1] Meanwhile the rate of growth in world tourism remains vibrant, with international tourism receipts having increased at a faster pace than world GNP, world merchandise export trade and world trade in services over the period 1985–1995. Forecasts suggest that the growth of world tourism will continue to outpace global economic growth to the year 2020.

I. Measurement and linkages between tourism and other sectors

4. It is important to note that this broad picture disguises considerable variation at the national level, and greater variation still at the regional level. In a number of developing countries, tourism represents a leading economic activity, having already overtaken cash crop agriculture or mineral extraction as their major source of national income, employment and export earnings. For example, tourism in Kenya has now displaced tea, coffee and horticultural produce as the country's leading export earner. At the regional level, meanwhile, the economic significance of tourism is often heightened. Tourism activity in almost all countries is concentrated within certain regions, typically where there are large cities or extensive coastal areas. This pattern can be seen, for example, in Spain, where the southern coastal regions, the island territories and Madrid dominate the regional distribution of tourism activity.

5. Another difficulty with these broad measures of the economic importance of tourism is that they do not, in themselves, provide a particularly good measure of tourism's economic impact. First, they measure the gross impact of tourism, while it is usually the incremental impact of tourism development that is important, that is to say, the capacity for additional tourism activity to generate additional income, employment and other economic benefits in the destination economy. Second, national tourism statistics are subject to a number of measurement defects which can seriously limit their value in making international comparisons of the economic role of tourism. It is usually considered preferable, therefore, to supplement these broad measures of the economic importance of tourism with information on a range of tourism multipliers.

6. The capacity of tourism to generate economic development is best seen by examining the impacts of additional tourist spending in a destination area, which in turn serves to generate incomes, employment and a range of other benefits for the host economy. Tourism multipliers attempt to summarize these incremental impacts in the form of a simple coefficient. The two most common formulations are the tourism income multiplier and the tourism employment multiplier.

7. The conceptual basis of the tourism income multiplier is the assumption that a direct injection of cash into a destination economy, for example, through spending by international tourists, will result in increased incomes for suppliers of tourism services. These incomes are termed "direct incomes". A proportion of these additional incomes will be saved while the remainder will be either spent on replenishing stocks or redistributed to tourism employees in the form of wages. These are known as "indirect incomes". A proportion of these incomes will in turn be saved while the remainder will be respent on consumer goods and services, generating "induced income" in the wider economy. At each stage, a proportion of the expenditure will be spent on imports, resulting in a leakage of expenditure from the local economy.

8. Tourism income multipliers exist in a number of different forms according to how they have been calculated. It is important not to confuse the different types of multiplier. A common formulation is the "Keynesian" multiplier, which measures the ratio of the initial increase in tourism expenditure to its final impact on incomes (comprising all the direct, indirect and induced components). Hence a Keynesian income multiplier value of 1.25 implies that an additional $1 million of tourism expenditure can be expected to generate an additional $1.25 million of final income in the tourism destination. "Ratio" multipliers, on the other hand, calculate the ratio of the direct impact to the final impact. Hence a ratio income multiplier of 1.5 implies that the generation of an additional $1 million of direct income will be associated with the generation of a further $0.50 million of indirect and induced income in the destination economy, leading to an overall $1.50 million increase in income.

9. The tourism employment multiplier operates on a similar basis, summarizing either the direct, indirect and induced employment generated by an additional sum of tourism expenditure in the destination economy, or the ratio of the increase in direct employment to the increase in overall employment. In either case, however, the higher the multiplier coefficient, the greater the amount of additional employment that will be created by a given increase in tourism expenditure.

10. As tables 1 and 2 show, tourism multipliers often display very substantial international variations.[2] The reason is that the multiplier coefficient is determined not only by the structure of the economy in which the tourism activity takes place but also by the spending patterns of the recipients of these expenditures. Countries with fledgling tourism sectors, where few economic linkages exist between tourism and other sectors of the economy,

usually experience lower income and employment multipliers. This is largely because of the tendency for indirect spending to be concentrated in the purchasing of imports from outside the national economy. Such an effect is particularly evident in the case of small island developing States where it is often difficult to meet the demands of a growing tourism sector from local supplies. An example is Tonga, which because of its limited manufacturing and service sectors has to import up to 85 per cent of the goods and services required by some sectors of the tourism industry.

Table 1
Tourism income multipliers[a] for selected countries

Kiribati	0.37	China, Hong Kong SAR[b]	0.87–1.02
Western Samoa	0.39–0.66	Seychelles	0.88–1.03
Tonga	0.42	Bermuda	1.03–1.09
Vanuatu	0.56–0.80	Cyprus	1.14
British Virgin Islands	0.58	Dominican Republic	1.20
Iceland	0.64	Egypt	1.23
Cayman Islands	0.65	Jamaica	1.23–1.27
Fiji	0.69–0.72	Sri Lanka	1.59
Bahamas	0.78–0.79	Ireland	1.72
Philippines	0.82	United Kingdom	1.73
Antigua	0.88	Turkey	1.96
Mauritius	0.96		

Sources: B. Archer, "Tourism and island economies", *Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management*, vol. 1 (1989), pp. 125–134; John E. Fletcher and H. Snee, "Tourism in the South Pacific Islands", *Progress in Tourism, Recreation and Hospitality Management*, vol. 1 (1989), pp. 114–124; and World Tourism Organization, various reports.

[a] "Keynesian" rather than "ratio" multipliers.

[b] Special Administrative Region.

Table 2
Tourism employment multipliers for selected countries

Kiribati	0.70 standardized jobs per 10,000 Australian dollars ($A) of tourist expenditure
Vanuatu	0.89 full-time and 1.03 full-time and part-time jobs per 1 million vatu (VT) of tourist expenditure
Tonga	0.96 standardized jobs per 10,000 pa'anga (T$) of tourist expenditure

Source: World Tourism Organization, various reports.

II. Economic challenges for the tourism industry

11. Private sector tourism companies have a crucial role to play in implementing the sustainable tourism imperative. Tourism businesses can influence the nature of tourism activity directly by modifying the products they offer and the methods they use in producing them. They also have a vested interest in maintaining the environmental and sociocultural

resources of destination areas, which represent their core business assets. The challenge for the private sector is therefore to:

(a) Recognize that sustainability is not an intrinsic attribute of certain niche markets (such as ecotourism) but a challenge to all tourism enterprises, regardless of their size or market orientation;

(b) Integrate environmental management systems and procedures into all aspects of corporate activity, including the use of environmental and social audits, life cycle assessments, and the training of staff in the principles and practices of sustainable management;

(c) Apply appropriate measures at the operational level to minimize all forms of waste, conserve energy and freshwater resources, and control harmful emissions into all environmental media;

(d) Plan and manage their operations so as to minimize potential environmental, social and cultural impacts, using local materials wherever possible and employing technologies appropriate to the local conditions;

(e) Involve all stakeholders in decision-making, including customers, staff, trading partners and the host community;

(f) Develop partnerships with the host community, Governments and their agencies, other private sector companies and international organizations, in order to enhance the prospects for bringing about the sustainable development of tourism.

III. Economic policy challenges for national Governments

12. While private sector tourism companies have a number of good reasons to ensure that their practices are sustainable, including the element of consumer pressure in certain market segments, market forces alone do not guarantee that tourism will be sustainable. National Governments must therefore assume overall responsibility for ensuring that tourism is properly planned and managed in ways that will minimize its adverse impacts on the environmental and social fabric of the destination. This, in turn, will help to enhance the prospects for tourism's bringing economic benefits to the host destination in the future.

13. Sustainable tourism should aim to capture the economic benefits of tourism without damaging or degrading the resources upon which tourism ultimately relies. Yet tourism is often perceived as an add-on to existing economic activities in an area. Consequently, tourism tends either to be overlooked or to lack priority in the planning process. An important challenge, both for national and for regional planning authorities, is therefore to ensure that tourism is given proper attention and priority in their development plans. This will require planning authorities to:

(a) Identify and monitor tourism activities in the destination area, particularly informal tourism which although less visible may represent a significant component of tourism activity in the area;

(b) Measure and evaluate the impact of tourism activity on the infrastructures and resources of the destination area, including the development of suitable indicators for assessing the sustainability of tourism;

(c) Integrate tourism fully into both regional and national development plans, so that tourism develops in harmony with other forms of social and economic development in the destination area;

(d) Consult widely with the host community to ensure that as broad a range of views as possible are incorporated into the development planning process.

14. Government at the national level, meanwhile, has an important role to play in reconciling the objectives of policies for the development of tourism with the objectives of other government policies. Unsustainable practices in related economic sectors will limit the potential for tourism to become more sustainable. Equally, sustainability in tourism must not be achieved at the expense of sustainability in other sectors of the economy. This will require national Governments to:

(a) Ensure that all environmental regulations and environmental policy measures are applied throughout the tourism sector, regardless of the size of the business or the type of tourism activity concerned;

(b) Manage tourism in protected areas, such as national parks, paying due regard to their limited capacity to accommodate tourism without becoming damaged or degraded;

(c) Plan the development of other economic activities (such as agriculture or mineral extraction) to ensure that they do not deplete or degrade resources important to the tourism sector;

(d) Make sure that the development of major infrastructures, such as road networks or water supply systems, caters for the needs not only of the tourism sector, but also of other industries in the area, as well as for the needs of local community as a whole;

(e) Take steps to reduce the seasonal pattern of tourism activity by developing out-of-season employment opportunities in destinations that are heavily dependent on tourism;

(f) Develop a strategy for taxing tourism activity that is efficient, fair and conducive to the sustainable development of tourism;

(g) Ensure that the economic benefits of tourism are distributed widely among the host population, so that local people have a strong incentive to protect tourism's environmental and cultural resource base.

15. Achieving sustainable tourism will require change on the part of all those involved in the tourism sector. The overarching challenge for national Governments must therefore be to develop policy frameworks that will enable and encourage these changes. This will require Governments to:

(a) Ensure that sustainability, rather than be the preserve merely of niche market segments such as ecotourism, is adopted as the primary objective of all sectors of the tourism industry, large and small, private and public;

(b) Encourage responsible practices, through the promotion of voluntary codes of conduct and environmental management schemes;

(c) Apply a range of environmental regulations and management measures appropriate to the context in which particular tourism activities take place, and to monitor those regulations and measures, and ensure that their importance is widely appreciated;

(d) Supplement these regulations and measures with appropriate financial incentive mechanisms such as user fees and tourist taxes: this will help to ensure that tourism operators and their customers are presented with the true costs of their activities;

(e) Apply the polluter pays principle to ensure that the burden of regulation is shared as equitably as possible;

(f) Adopt a precautionary approach to the development of policies aimed at fostering the sustainable development of tourism: this means taking positive action even before conclusive proof of cause and effect has been established.

16. Tourism is fundamentally a "people-centred" activity, involving the provision of a range of services to customers who are travelling away from their usual place of residence. However, as the present report has already noted, employment in the tourism sector tends to be dominated by low-skilled, part-time, casual and seasonal work. The nature of work in the tourism sector may act as an impediment to the pursuit of sustainable tourism because (a) the precariousness of employment in tourism can prevent people from acquiring training and education in the sustainable conduct of tourism; and (b) tourism businesses tend to experience high rates of staff turnover, so that even when employees do receive training and education their acquired skills are quickly lost to the sector.

17. The challenge for national Governments and their agencies is therefore to:

(a) Ensure that sustainability issues are fully integrated into tourism courses offered by schools, colleges of further education and establishments of higher education;

(b) Work with companies to develop training schemes and to establish networks for the exchange of training materials dealing with sustainability issues in the tourism sector;

(c) Coordinate the efforts across the range of government departments and agencies involved in tourism to reduce the precariousness of employment in the tourism sector;

(d) Encourage tourism businesses to employ local people, so that the host community receives more of the economic benefits of tourism; this in turn will help to reinforce the bond between the host community and the cultural and environmental assets used by the tourism sector;

(e) Encourage tourism businesses to train and promote local personnel, so that local perspectives can be better integrated into the management ethos and practices of the company.

18. The developed world dominates the pattern of international tourism flows, with more than 90 per cent of world tourism flows originating in the developed countries. Available data suggest, however, that tourism demand in the developed countries is now reaching a "ceiling" as the available free time and discretionary spending allocated to tourism activities reach maximum levels.[1]

19. If the economic benefits of tourism are to be experienced more widely throughout the world, then it is important to find ways of increasing participation in international travel, especially by those living in developing countries. This might involve seeking to reduce or even remove (a) tariff-like barriers to international travel, such as differential exit taxes on residents and visitors, which serve to discourage foreign travel by residents; and (b) non-tariff barriers to international travel, such as travel allowance restrictions, which not only discourage foreign travel but also limit residents' spending potential while abroad. At the same time, it must be recognized that any further growth in international travel and tourism must take place within sustainability constraints. Otherwise the benefits brought by increased international tourism will prove ephemeral.

20. Coastal tourism destinations need to be singled out for special attention. Such areas have often relied on tourism as a major source of income and employment, yet they now find their established markets in serious decline. Frequently a contributory factor has been the impairment of the attractiveness of the destination by poorly planned and managed tourism development in the past. Coastal tourism is particularly vulnerable in this respect, as it typically involves concentrating large numbers of tourists in some of the world's most

fragile ecological areas. It has been suggested, for example, that more than 50 per cent of the European Union's ecologically richest and most sensitive areas are coastal ones.

21. Even where the tourism sector of a coastal area remains in good economic shape, the pattern of tourism activity is often highly seasonal in character, leading to the underutilization of resources during the low season months and their overutilization during the high season months.

22. The challenge for national Governments is therefore to:

(a) Identify ways in which tourism activity can be spread more evenly throughout the year, thereby reducing the seasonality of tourism in coastal areas;

(b) Encourage the development of economic activities that can complement and help to support tourism in coastal areas, especially those that can be pursued during periods other than the main tourist season;

(c) Assist tourism organizations of all kinds in assessing and responding to the changing nature of the international demand for tourism, for example by developing alternative forms of tourism.

23. As indicated previously, tourism has a crucial but precarious role to play in the economies of most small island developing States. This presents a number of special challenges for their Governments, including:

(a) Identifying ways in which the tourism sector can continue to remain competitive and grow without imposing significant further damage on the environmental and cultural fabric of destination areas;

(b) Balancing the heightened demands placed on local resources by tourism in island locations with the demands put upon them by other economic activities and by host communities;

(c) Plugging expenditure leakage, including the fostering of backward linkages from tourism into the rest of the destination economy and the development of forms of tourism that enable local communities to receive a greater share of the benefits;

(d) Managing carefully the extent of foreign involvement in the tourism sector, including not only the involvement of transnational corporations in tourism but also the employment by the tourism economy of expatriate labour;

(e) Diversifying the national economy in order to reduce dependency on tourism as a source of income, employment and foreign exchange earnings.

IV. Economic policy challenges for the international community

24. The international community has an important role to play in widening the sustainability agenda, providing the necessary funding for the development of sustainable tourism infrastructure projects, informing national tourism policies and encouraging good practices in the sustainable planning and management of tourism.

25. Some of the reasons why the sustainable tourism debate has tended to focus on developing countries are the following. First, the natural and sociocultural environments in these countries are usually less damaged and in a more pristine state than those in industrialized societies and thus constitute a major resource for tourism development. The likelihood of achieving a more sustainable form of tourism development is therefore much

higher in such developing countries than in countries where there is a heavily developed tourism industry.

26. Second, developing countries have generally found it very hard to compete with developed country tourism destinations in world markets. Where developing countries have attempted to develop markets in mass tourism, they have found that in order to compete effectively they must invest heavily in their basic infrastructures. Often this has involved the construction of Western-style tourism facilities. What is becoming increasingly clear, however, is that the rapid development of mass tourism in developing countries has imposed serious environmental and social costs on host destinations.

27. Some developing countries have attempted to exploit hastily their comparative advantage by investing in niche forms of tourism, such as ecotourism and cultural tourism, aiming at very quick economic returns; in these cases, however, disturbingly similar impacts have resulted. The experience is that these "soft" forms of tourism can be just as destructive as mass tourism, if they are not planned, developed and managed in a sustainable manner, so as to ensure that there are no adverse effects on the natural environment or the local sociocultural fabric, and that the local community is involved in all development and management phases.

28. The challenge for the international community must therefore be to assist national Governments, especially those of developing countries, in finding ways to enable their tourism industries to become more competitive in world markets without damaging their environmental and cultural asset base. This will involve:

(a) Helping to develop workable techniques and frameworks for assessing the environmental and social impacts of tourism at the national, regional and local levels;

(b) Providing practical advice to the tourism industry on how to implement sustainable tourism through the use of integrated environmental management and social responsibility programmes;

(c) Working with Governments at all levels to develop a range of meaningful and effective planning guidelines, codes of good practice, regulatory frameworks and policy provisions aimed at achieving sustainable tourism;

(d) Promoting internationally recognized quality assurance schemes for tourism and helping to adapt existing schemes, through modification, to the tourism management context;

(e) Facilitating the international exchange of information, experiences and technical skills, especially between the developed and the developing countries;

(f) Establishing networks that raise awareness of the need for sustainability in all aspects of tourism and provide training on sustainability issues for those working in the tourism industry, especially in the developing country context;

(g) Encouraging wider community participation in the planning, operation and consumption of tourism.

29. The World Tourism Organization has been instrumental in providing this type of technical assistance to Governments over its 20 years of cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) as its executing agency in the field of tourism. Assistance has been provided in the form of specific country or subregional projects, technical seminars, workshops, conferences, training courses for government officials and local authorities, and numerous publications and manuals.

30. Yet, much more needs to be done to assist developing countries in facing the challenge of sustainability in tourism, and the World Tourism Organization is in a position to multiply its technical support activities in cooperation with other agencies and donors.

31. The international community already plays an important role in tourism development by providing funding for tourism-related infrastructure projects. Major funders include various World Bank affiliates, a number of United Nations organizations (such as UNDP), the jointly administered Global Environment Facility (GEF), the development assistance departments of many countries, and a range of other international financial organizations. Other international organizations, such as the World Tourism Organization, are often involved as executing agencies for the provision of technical assistance.

32. The challenge for all such institutions must be to ensure that the projects they fund actually contribute to the sustainable development of tourism and are in line with the general and specific recommendations of the World Tourism Organization in this field, or with the tourism development master plans that have been established for many countries, often with World Tourism Organization support. This includes:

(a) Making use of environmental and social impact assessment methods when appraising funding proposals for investment in tourism-related infrastructures;

(b) Adopting social cost-benefit analysis and non-market environmental valuation techniques in appraising tourism infrastructure projects;

(c) Encouraging a wider use of environmental and social impact techniques, social cost-benefit analysis and non-market environmental valuation techniques by national Governments and local planning authorities;

(d) Developing integrated infrastructure development plans that take account not only of the needs of the tourism sector but also of those of other economic activities and of the local community as a whole;

(e) Ensuring that funding, rather than concentrate solely on the development of new, alternative forms of tourism, is available to assist in making mass tourism more sustainable.

33. The presence of a number of very large and powerful transnational corporations in world tourism has led to concerns that the regulatory competence of the nation State is now being superseded by the power of big business. Yet it is widely recognized that the market alone cannot be relied upon to deliver sustainable development. The international community can help national Governments to redress the growing imbalance by:

(a) Working with national Governments to determine the best combination of regulations, incentives-based measures and voluntary compliance schemes for ensuring that the investment practices of transnational corporations are fully compliant with the principles of sustainable tourism;

(b) Encouraging environmental and social assessment of the impacts of foreign direct investment, advising on good practice and exposing poor practice;

(c) Insisting that transnational corporations transfer appropriate technologies, technical skills, training and environmental education to their host countries;

(d) Encouraging transnational corporations to employ local staff, particularly at management levels, and to develop effective mechanisms for the participation of both the workforce and the wider host community in corporate decision-making.

34. It has already been emphasized that there is need for a greater participation of all of the world's population in foreign travel, especially those located in developing countries,

in order that the benefits of tourism may be experienced more widely. The role of the international community will therefore be to:

(a) Work to remove artificial barriers to tourism trade, under the provisions of the General Agreement on Trade in Services;[3]

(b) Facilitate further multilateral tourism trade liberalization on the basis of the General Agreement on Trade in Services;

(c) Support and encourage the development of domestic and interregional tourism, which can have a relatively greater economic impact on the host destination because of the lower expenditure leakage rates associated with such activities.

35. Further growth in world travel and tourism must take place, however, only on a sustainable basis. There is no logic in facilitating travel if the activities it comprises are unsustainable. This would only be counter-productive with respect to the long-term interests both of the tourism industry and of society as a whole.

36. Achieving sustainable tourism will require change on the part of all those involved in the tourism industry. The role of the international community must be to encourage and support imaginative responses to the challenge of sustainable tourism. This encompasses, *inter alia*,:

(a) Promoting the wider use of debt-for-nature swaps, which involve non-governmental organizations' buying developing country debt at a discount from creditor banks in return for the debtor country's agreeing to invest a similar sum of local currency in environmental protection projects;

(b) Including environmental and social accounts in the development of "tourism satellite accounts", which cover only the economic costs and benefits of tourism.

Notes

1 World Tourism Organization, *Tourism 2020 Vision* (Madrid, 1998).

2 Note that the multipliers are "Keynesian" rather than "ratio" multipliers.

3 See *Legal Instruments Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations, done at Marrakesh on 15 April 1994* (GATT secretariat publication, Sales No. GATT/1994–7).

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Tourism and sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Tourism and social development*

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I. Social aspects of tourism

1. Tourism has important social impacts on countries. Its positive impacts upon the social development and modernization of host societies arise from its contributions, *inter alia*, to employment creation, worker training and the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Moreover, the increasing participation of local communities in tourism development has encouraged modern structures of public administration as well as the sharing of joint responsibilities between public institutions and the private sector. However, there are a number of negative social impacts that can accompany tourism development both in the developed and in the developing world. As a result, the social policy challenges for national Governments are to address a wide range of concerns, such as those related to safeguarding local cultures; encouraging community participation in tourism; seeking more equitable distribution of tourism benefits; preventing exploitation of women and children in tourism; and improving conditions of employment.

2. The rapid development of tourism will inevitably cause changes in the host communities and economies, especially where the numbers of tourist arrivals have increased strongly, for example, in Bali and Indonesia, or where the ratio of tourist arrivals to local population is high, for example, in Barbados. Other factors, such as the degree of urbanization in the host community, and the strength of local cultural and social norms, also influence the impact of tourism on an area. Tourism activity increases the participation of women in the workforce, and enlarges access by the local population to improved services that have been provided as part of tourism development. The opportunity to demonstrate host culture to visitors is often a source of considerable pride for a community.

3. Many of the current social problems related to tourism, for example, drug abuse and prostitution, are not new or specific to any one country. What is relatively new is the growing international realization that without appropriate action, these problems will intensify and further damage the image of tourism as a beneficial force in development. Social impacts that are perceived to be negative require a management strategy to contain and mitigate them.

A. The social dimension of tourism

4. The intensity of the social impacts arising from tourism development depends on a range of factors, for example, the type and rate of tourism growth, the ratio of visitors to members of the resident community, seasonal trends and the sociocultural resilience of the host community. A further difficulty in analysing tourism's social impact concerns the differing characteristics of visitors. Similarly, host communities have differing expectations of visitors and behavioural patterns which are rooted in indigenous culture. The potential for tension is obvious; international tourists do not so much *integrate with* as *confront* local communities. The social dimensions of tourism will differ between countries. Among the most common and prevalent social impacts of tourism that have caused concern involve the image of the destination, the exploitation of vulnerable persons, capacity considerations, localized benefits and costs, and health.

5. Marketing, which is at the heart of tourism development, seeks to present the most favourable and attractive image of a destination. It is usually an activity that is budget-constrained, thereby limiting what most national tourism administrations (NTA) can do without assistance from foreign partners, often represented by the travel trade in the tourist-generating countries. At another level, private sector partners develop their own international links including publicity for their own services and facilities. International cooperation provides both an opportunity and a danger. The opportunity is to share costs and allow a wider market penetration and coverage as a consequence of a partnership arrangement. The danger is that, without careful monitoring by the government or NTA (or both), tourism publicity may develop an undesirable image for a country. At the simplest level, advertising a country as a "cheap" destination has not only financial but also social implications. One role of government is to provide such policy guidelines to both the NTA and the private sector as ensure that a misleading and undesirable image is not projected.

6. The potential conflict between the image a government (and the host tourism sector) may want to project and the one that the foreign tour operators believe they can market can be negotiated and resolved; commercial motivation should never be the excuse for projecting a socially damaging and unacceptable image. If this type of publicity is not controlled, it can lead to the attraction of undesirable tourists, for example, sex tourists.

7. The fact that many international tourists travel from the wealthy countries of the world to its less wealthy ones has the effect of exposing the host countries to different cultures, lifestyles and income levels; these reflect living standards that are usually well above those of the host countries. This *demonstration effect* can cause economic, social and political impacts, not least of all a sense of envy

of the apparent advantages of the foreigners' perceived lifestyle. Often the gap between income levels is such that local peoples feel exploited owing to the relative cheapness of the services that they offer.

8. The apparent affluence of tourists attracts the providers of undesirable services, particularly drug suppliers and prostitutes. Once these services become prevalent and common, a destination acquires an image or reputation that will attract undesired categories of tourists. As these types of business increase, so does the sense of exploitation in the host community, particularly among those not engaged in such services. The exploitation of the most vulnerable in society increases antagonism towards tourists and tourism and may well undermine the long-term sustainability of the tourism sector in a place.

9. Without adequate community participation in tourism development, particularly where tourism development is rapid and large-scale, a sense of exploitation can exacerbate social tensions and alienate the host community.

10. The growth of tourism has also put pressure on existing resources. Tourism is avaricious in consuming natural resources, including water and land. Where priority is given to meeting the needs of the tourism sector, this may often be at the expense of local people. It is sometimes difficult for local people to understand why tourists (and tourism) should be given facilities and services that they themselves do not enjoy — for example, access to clean water, an electricity supply, and support services perhaps including personal security. Where tourism development is based on an *enclave* model, and where there is limited contact between visitor and hosts, the feeling of estrangement and of being underprivileged is intensified. Recent demonstrations targeted at arriving tourists at airports in Kerala, India, reflected the disenchantment of local villagers about reduced water supplies which is an alleged consequence of overbuilding in the hotel sector.

11. As overcrowding occurs, the host community may find itself under greater pressure from visitors, a pressure which may change the rhythm of a community's lifestyle. Access to shops and transport may be more difficult; prices may rise to take advantage of the tourists' presence, causing a knock-on effect for local residents. Frustration with tourists may cause an *irridex effect*, whereby residents question the overall advantages of tourism because of the inconveniences caused by it.

12. Although tourism does provide economic benefits to a country at large, for example, foreign exchange earnings and government revenues, the dislocative effects of tourism — the overcrowding, the pressure on resources, the challenges to established culture and the related demands that tourism makes on communities — are borne locally. Unless some if not all of the economic and financial benefits from local tourism activity remain in the community, the costs of hosting tourists may be disproportionate to the benefits received. Where this situation obtains, it will inevitably give rise to resentment and possible hostility towards tourists.

13. As international tourism increases, there are growing concerns about the transmission of diseases and the availability of appropriate levels of health care. Appropriate institutions in most developed tourism-generating countries can offer services and medical advice to prospective travellers. Facilities are also available to deal with most medical conditions. In developing countries, medical services and facilities will usually be less available, but they are sometimes specifically provided for tourists. For example, hotels may provide in-house medical services.

B. The cultural dimension of tourism

14. As far as the cultural well-being of the destinations are concerned, tourism can have both negative dimensions, such as cultural deterioration and conflict due to cultural differences, and positive ones, such as cultural exchange, and the revival of traditional crafts and ceremonies.

15. The major negative dimension is the deterioration of valuable cultural assets. As with most social changes, cultural deterioration does not take place overnight but rather over a protracted period. Change may occur through a social demonstration effect — that is to say, imitating what foreign visitors do, wear and eat — but may also be induced by economic factors. For example, the employment of women in tourism is generally seen as a liberating factor; it may however, be viewed alternatively as a means of undermining traditional family structures and values. Similarly, employment in tourism that requires shift work can disrupt traditional family life and religious observance.

16. Perhaps a more serious form of cultural deterioration is to be found where historic sites and buildings are not protected and where the traditional environment has been replaced or has virtually disappeared. Cultural awareness is a necessary input into tourism development. There is a significant role for the local community in protecting a culture — in deciding what it is prepared to offer, how its cultural patrimony is to be presented and which, if any, aspects of the culture are to be off-limits to visitors. In Switzerland, for example, part of the annual Maidens'

Festival is closed to visitors in order to protect its cultural significance and status.

17. On the other hand, it is now common for destinations to offer "cultural evenings" — for example, "Scottish", "Thai" and "Indian" evenings — where presentations of traditional dance, music and folklore are made, usually accompanied by a meal featuring indigenous cuisine.

18. However, cross-cultural contacts are also a potential cause of social discontent — particularly where language barriers frustrate close contacts and cultural exploration. Where host communities are faced with large numbers of visitors, these problems will be intensified particularly where the local culture is fragile. The concept of carrying capacity must be sufficiently comprehensive to evaluate the ability of a local community to absorb tourists without submerging the local culture.

19. A common problem is that many visitors have little or no appreciation of local culture. This situation is often reflected in cases where local communities may also have little or no understanding of foreign visitors' cultures. These problems are exacerbated where there is a language barrier between the two parties. To some extent, these problems can be mitigated by introduction of tourism community awareness campaigns. This measure is now generally being advocated in tourism development planning. However, without some of the benefits from tourism accruing to local communities through the creation of jobs, entrepreneurial opportunities and social benefits, these campaigns may be ineffective.

20. Many tourists are travelling in part to experience different cultures. The growth of long-haul tourism from Europe to Asia is an example of this trend. The cultural exchange can benefit both parties and, of course, generates economic and financial advantages to the host community. There is some evidence to suggest that, at least from Europe, there is a trend towards long-haul culture-based holidays.[1] If such a trend continues, then this will require that some education in cultural differentiation awareness be offered to both tourists and the host community. To some extent, this has already been initiated in countries like Sri Lanka and Western Samoa where on disembarkation at the airport visitors are given a welcome leaflet which includes examples of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. On long-haul flights, airlines have opportunities through in-flight video to inform passengers about the expectations and sensitivities of host communities and countries. For example, Iran Air informs female passengers of the expected mode of dress in the country.

21. Tourism has contributed significantly to the revival of traditional crafts and ceremonies. The traditional handicraft industries retain much of the product value-added within communities and provide employment opportunities for women. In countries where tourism is mainly based on wildlife and ecotourism, rural community development has benefited.

II. Social policy challenges for the tourism industry

22. One of the major social challenges for the private sector is to overcome narrow sectional interests in the interest of furthering tourism development and increasing levels of benefits. In South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia, various organizations within the tourism sector have combined to form umbrella organizations (for example, the Zimbabwe Tourism Council) so as to provide a representative voice for tourism and a conduit for government liaison. These organizations also provide a forum in which to discuss general issues important to the sector.

23. The tourism sector has been characterized as offering generally poor conditions of work — low wages, irregular working hours, and part-time and seasonal work. These characteristics are reflected in high rates of labour turnover, low skills and poor service standards. Worldwide, tourism employs many women, young people and, often, immigrant workers; all three groups can be seriously disadvantaged in employment terms. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has, in its tripartite composition (Governments, and employers' and workers' organizations), adopted international conventions and recommendations to protect workers' rights.[2] The ILO Convention concerning the hospitality sector (Convention No. 172 concerning Working Conditions in Hotels, Restaurants and Similar Establishments (1991)) calls for policies to improve the working conditions in hotels, restaurants and similar establishments. In particular, the Convention provides for the regulation of working hours and compensation of overtime; daily and weekly rest periods; paid annual leave; regularly paid basic remuneration; and the prohibition of sale and purchase of employment.[3]

24. New technologies in the hotel, catering and tourism sector have been a prominent subject of discussion in ILO in 1997.[4] As technology continues to facilitate the development and operation of tourism, it should be monitored to evaluate impacts on jobs and conditions of work. Equitable distribution of productivity benefits; new

management styles; changes in skill requirements; training and retraining needs; high turnover rates; promotion of the development of small enterprises; and labour-management relations in view of the changes taking place, are all areas of concern.

25. Government alone cannot secure needed social improvements in the tourism sector, although it can legislate on matters relating to health and safety at work, health insurance and pensions, minimum wages, and employment of women and young people. To be effective, legislation has to be implemented; tripartite social dialogue can facilitate such implementation. With Governments being encouraged by the international agencies to withdraw from direct operating roles in the tourism sector[5] so as to create an "enabling environment" to facilitate private sector development, it is desirable that future discussion on conditions of work in the tourism sector should feature a strengthened dialogue between employers and employee representatives. In the same way that there is growing support for community participation in tourism development, there is a likely greater role for open communication, consultation and negotiation among the social partners in all enterprises, regardless of their size.[6]

26. Collective agreements may be necessary to cover flexible working arrangements and other issues such as the repercussions of the introduction of new technologies on employment, skills, wages, job security and workers' rights. Such agreements may be of assistance, in particular to SMEs with respect to improving their competitiveness through the heightened skills and performance of their workers. In many of the small companies, training of employees and conditions of work are not yet high priorities, although quality of services and a properly motivated labour force should be important considerations. The financing of training activities is therefore recognized to be an important challenge for the tripartite dialogue among Governments and workers' and employers' organizations.

III. Social policy challenges for national Governments

27. Much more can be done to optimize the benefits from tourism and to limit negative impacts. Such actions will require a coordinated approach of Governments, the private sector, workers' and employers' organizations, non-governmental organizations and international agencies. Government can initiate policy interventions in areas such as the sustainability of tourism development, indigenization of the tourism sector, promotion of entrepreneurial initiative, community participation in tourism development planning and community tourism awareness campaigns, safeguarding of local cultures, human resource development, participation of women and children, and a legal framework for tourism.

28. The sustainability of tourism has an important social dimension. Tourism can and does generate income to improve the social, cultural and natural environment which can be shared with the local communities. It is now common practice even in developed countries to charge entrance fees to museums and recreational amenities to contribute to their upkeep.

29. A common long-term social development objective is the indigenization of tourism operations and the benefits resulting from tourism through the promoting of national funding, management and ownership in the tourism sector. One way to encourage indigenization is to "reserve" some areas of tourism development for local investors. For example, in areas of tourism where SMEs operate, such as the areas of small and medium-sized hotels, and car hire, foreign investors might be excluded; or if they were allowed to enter, they might not be offered any investment incentives. In Zambia, for example, privatization of game lodges and hunting concessions has been carried out on an international competitive bid basis; but certain leases and hunting concessions have been reserved for domestic bidders so as to encourage both indigenous investors and, particularly, indigenous entrepreneurs. On the other hand, lifting restrictions on foreign investments and allowing them in where, until recently, they were banned correspond to general trends of economic globalization. Honduras, for example, has opened its attractive coastline to foreign landownership in order to attract investments in the development of tourism.

30. If more indigenous business ownership could be developed, the perception of tourism as a foreign-dominated sector would be reduced. This objective is already receiving attention from international agencies and from some Governments. More needs to be done, particularly as related to the provision of education, training and encouragement for prospective indigenous entrepreneurs.

31. In many developing countries, tourism is often regarded as an industry provided for and managed by foreigners. Although this is something of an exaggeration, it does have a certain validity. In many developing countries, tourists enjoy a standard of amenity and services that is not available to the majority of local people. This can lead to antagonism towards tourists, political dissatisfaction and a strengthening of feelings of deprivation. Community tourism awareness campaigns try to inform communities about why

tourism is being developed, the potential benefits that can be realized and the opportunities for participation in the sector. Informing the community should be a continuing process and should be a responsibility of the national tourism administration, private sector associations and community representatives.

32. Much more needs to be done to strengthen community participation. Communities should be allowed to comment on development proposals and perhaps be involved in the implementation of the proposals. Perhaps progress on this issue can be best achieved through the funding agencies, which could insist on such a requirement's being put into project proposals.

33. Community participation has to be linked to community benefits. An example of such an initiative comes from one of the world's major civil engineering projects, the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. Through this project, water is pumped from Lesotho to South Africa. A World Bank-supported project has incorporated a small export tax on every gallon of water exported. This now large and growing fund is used to compensate displaced farmers and to stimulate small scale business, for example, pony-trekking, handicrafts and related tourism facilities. The economic and financial spin-offs from this project are a model for countries. The Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE) project in Zimbabwe and the Administrative Management Design for Game Management Areas (ADMADE) project in Zambia are two other examples where community involvement in tourism — in this case, in anti-poaching activities — financially benefits the participating communities.

34. It is for national Governments to decide what type and scale of tourism development are appropriate in particular locations. They have to be sensitive to cultural norms and traditions and to intervene when necessary and where appropriate to prevent cultural deterioration. To stimulate cultural awareness, they should work closely with communities and the private sector to ensure that available funding is used effectively and efficiently.

35. Some of the major pressures on cultures derive from a too rapid growth in visitor arrivals and unrestricted access to culturally fragile areas. National Governments can intervene to ensure that developments in tourism have been of an appropriate scale and in a location to meet the social carrying capacity of a community. In Vanuatu, the Government decided to permit tourism development on only three designated islands so as to protect more remote locations from tourism incursions. In Seychelles, the Government has implemented strict control over the expansion of tourist accommodations and over where any new development may take place. This has not only protected the culture of Seychelles from overexposure, but also limited environmental impacts, thereby allowing Seychelles to market itself as a pristine tourism environment at a commensurately high price. Bhutan has used visa control to limit the number of tourists so as to preserve its cultural identity. Bermuda has used licensing to limit the number of cruise ships allowed to call each day. This overall control on numbers together with the development of specific facilities for day cruise visitors took pressure off its resident population. In Tanalot, Bali, the State Governor intervened to prevent the building of a hotel that would have impeded access to, and views of, a traditional temple.

36. Although tourism is an international industry, business must do more to provide opportunities for nationals. One of the social problems related to tourism in the developing countries is the lack of indigenous senior managers. This lack adds to the perception that tourism is a foreigners' industry. It is a perception that has to change if tourism is to attract quality staff to meet increasingly globalized service standards. There is a major role for government in achieving this objective. However, as is the case for so many other aspects of the tourism sector, policies will have to be formulated in consultation with the private sector, and with the continuing support of the specialist international agencies.

37. Although it may be argued that women have been exploited and abused by tourism, one can counter that tourism has also provided many opportunities for their productive participation in the sector. In many countries, women have been very active as entrepreneurs and have created for themselves new economic and social opportunities. Every effort should be made to encourage this trend through affirmative action programmes, training and education, and appropriate support measures. Much has been achieved in this area over the last decade but more can be done. There is already in existence a wide range of organizations at national and international levels that pursue specific agendas for women. Stakeholders in the tourism sector should recognize the contribution that women have made to tourism and can continue to make in the future.

38. Another vulnerable group of workers in the tourism sector comprises young people and children. Child labour in the tourism sector encompasses far more than the sexual abuse of children by tourists, which is what Governments, non-governmental organizations and international agencies have so far been focusing on. Working children are found as helpers in all tourism activities, but mainly in hidden places such as kitchens. Being present in places of

accommodation and entertainment, they easily become victims of sexual abuse as well. It is the link between children's doing "normal work" and their being led to provide sexual services that is so particularly characteristic of child labour in tourism.[7] However, child labour, as defined by ILO Convention No. 138 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1973),[8] is by itself forbidden in most countries.

39. Governments should ensure that there is an appropriate legal framework available to manage and control the tourism sector. Such a framework is needed to prevent exploitation of resources and people, and to stop sex tourism and the abuse of children. Legislation itself is not sufficient, however: it will require commitment by Governments to implement the legislation and to secure international collaboration to trace and prosecute offenders.

IV. Social policy challenges for the international community

40. Within the last four years, three major international meetings have discussed issues concerning workers' rights and employment worldwide, including in developing countries. The World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, adopted the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development[9] proclaiming, *inter alia*, the recognition of rights of "basic workers". The World Summit declared its specific commitments to, *inter alia*, the prohibition of forced labour and of child labour; freedom of association; the right to organize and bargain collectively; equal remuneration for work of equal value; and the elimination of discrimination in employment. The World Trade Organization's First Ministerial Conference, held in Singapore in 1996, saw the States concerned reaffirm their commitment to the Copenhagen agreements. In 1998, the International Labour Conference of ILO adopted the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work in Geneva. The Declaration takes up fundamental rights that are the subject of ILO conventions, namely: (a) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining; (b) the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour; (c) the effective abolition of child labour; and (d) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. The Conference declared that all members of ILO, even if they had not ratified the conventions in question, had an obligation to respect, to promote and to realize, the principles concerning the fundamental rights that were the subject of those conventions.[2]

41. The link between tourism and sexual exploitation of children received particular international attention when, in 1996, the Government of Sweden, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT), and the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child organized in Stockholm, the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children. As a follow-up, the World Tourism Organization convened a Tourism and Child Prostitution Watch Task Force which aims to mobilize international opinion to persuade Governments to take actions to prevent such sexual exploitation. A subsequent World Tourism Organization World Leaders' Conference on Social Impacts of Tourism, held in Manila in 1997, produced the Manila Declaration,[10] signed by representatives of 77 countries and territories who pledged to eradicate sex tourism. Recent actions against paedophiles by authorities in the Philippines, Thailand and other countries, including tourism-sending countries, are indicative of efforts being made to eradicate this practice.

Notes

[1] P. Aderhold, *The European Holiday Market for Developing Countries* (Copenhagen, Dr. Peter Aderhold Institute of Tourism Research Planning, 1995).

[2] See ILO, *ILO Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up adopted by the International Labour Conference at its Eighty-sixth Session, Geneva, 18 June 1998* (Geneva, 1998).

[3] See ILO, *International Labour Conventions and Recommendations, 1977–1995*, vol. III, part I, Conventions (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1996).

[4] ILO, *New Technologies and Working Conditions in the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Sector* (Geneva, 1997).

[5] C. L. Jenkins, "Tourism in developing countries — the privatisation issue", in Tourism: the State of the Art, A. V. Seaton, ed. (Chichester, United Kingdom, John Wiley & Sons, 1994).

[6] ILO, *Note on the Proceedings: Tripartite Meeting on the Effects of New Technologies on Employment and Working Conditions in the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Sector* (Geneva, 1997).

[7] M. Black, *In the Twilight Zone: Child Workers in the Hotel, Tourism and Catering Industry* (Geneva, ILO, 1995).

[8] See ILO, *International Labour Conventions and Recommendations, 1952–1976*, vol. II, part I, Conventions (Geneva, International Labour Office, 1996).

[9] *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[10] WTO, *Manila Declaration on the Social Impacts of Tourism* (Madrid, 1997).

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Tourism and sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Tourism and environmental protection*

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I. Tourism and environmental protection

1. There is a complex relationship between tourism and the environment. Given its scale and global extent, it is inevitable that tourism has important environmental impacts. These impacts are related to resource consumption and the pollution and waste generated by tourism activities, including impacts from tourism-related transport. At the same time, beaches and mountains, rivers, forests and biological diversity make the environment a basic resource upon which the tourism industry depends to thrive and grow, and threats to the environment threaten the viability of the tourism industry. Nevertheless, in various circumstances, tourism can significantly contribute to environmental protection.

A. Environmental impacts of tourism

2. The main adverse impacts of tourism on the environment are connected to pressure on natural resources, harm to wildlife and habitats (with associated loss of biological diversity), the generation of pollution and wastes, and social and cultural pressures related to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

Natural resources

3. The main natural resources at threat are freshwater, land and landscape, marine resources, the atmosphere and local resources, as follows:

(a) Freshwater. There is overuse of critical water resources by the tourism industry for hotels, swimming pools and golf courses. This is of particular concern in such regions as the Mediterranean, where water resources are scarce and each tourist consumes more than 200 litres a day;

(b) Land and landscape. Tourism development can lead to sand mining, beach and sand dune erosion, soil erosion and urbanization. Road and airport construction can lead to land degradation, loss of wildlife habitats and deterioration of scenery;

(c) Marine resources. Tourism and recreational activities (scuba diving, snorkelling, sport fishing), can lead to damage to coral reefs and subsequent impacts on coastal protection and fisheries;

(d) Atmosphere. Threats to the atmosphere are related to the high levels of energy use in tourism facilities and for tourism-related transportation;

(e) Local resources. Tourism can create pressure on local resources, such as energy, food, water and other raw materials which may be in short supply.

Wildlife and habitats

4. The main harm to wildlife and habitats occur where tourism activities disrupt biological resources or operate in ecologically fragile areas, as follows:

(a) Biological resources. Tourism can lead to the disruption of wildlife habitats, clearance of vegetation for tourism developments, increased pressure on endangered species due to trade and hunting, increased demand for fuelwood, and forest fires;

(b) Ecologically fragile areas, such as rain forests, wetlands, mangroves, coral reefs and sea grass beds. If nature tourism is not properly planned and managed it can threaten the world's most ecologically fragile areas, including parks and natural world heritage sites.

Pollution and wastes

5. Pollution and wastes generated by the tourism industry can lead to the following forms of contamination:

(a) Land contamination from solid wastes and litter (a tourist produces an average of about one kilogram of waste a day);

(b) Freshwater contamination from pollution by sewage;

(c) Contamination of marine waters and coastal areas from sediment run-off, pollution from land-based hotels and marinas, and waste and litter linked with marine sports and cruises. For example, in 1995, it was estimated that cruise ships in the Caribbean alone produced more than 70,000 tons of waste each year;

(d) Air contamination from air pollution from tourist transportation at the local level, and at the global level, impacts, especially from carbon dio ·de (CO_2) emissions related to energy use in transportation, air-conditioning and heating o. ·ourist facilities, etc.;

(e) Noise, from ground as well as air transportation.

Box 1

Environmental impacts of tourism in coastal areas and small island developing States

On islands and along coastal areas, the main types of pollution in coastal waters resulting from tourism include sediments, sewage, solid waste, nutrients, synthetic organic chemicals, oil and pathogens. These result in eutrophication and deteriorating water quality, which have adverse effects on coastal ecosystems and the living resources and so impair their value for tourism as well as other uses. This, in particular, is the case of coral reefs, which are at high risk worldwide.

Tourism development can be intensive on coastal fringes, and has caused major damage to coastal ecosystems. For example, three quarters of the sand dunes on the Mediterranean coastline between Spain and Sicily have disappeared, mainly as a result of urbanization linked to tourism development.

Development of new berths for cruise ships can destroy valuable coastal habitats. Their massive anchors and chains have, for instance, gouged large chasms 3 to 9 metres deep in parts of the Caribbean.

Because of island characteristics and limitations of resources, adverse environmental effects from tourism may have more immediate repercussions than elsewhere. This was highlighted at a conference on the theme "Sustainable tourism in small island developing States and other islands" held at Lanzarote, Canary Islands, in 1998.

Box 2
Tourism in mountain regions

Mountain regions and communities often have fragile environments and socio-economic relations, the latter frequently important factors in environmental management. Problems associated with tourism in mountain regions include sewage pollution of rivers; sedimentation and emissions from construction activities; erosion and landslides linked to trails and skiing/snowmobiling; water extraction from streams to supply resorts; damage to habitats during construction and use; interruption by roads and construction of animal migration between life zones; and litter accumulation on trails.

In North America, awareness is growing within the skiing industry of its effects on mountain environments and of the benefits from applying sound environmental management practices. Environmental management of ski areas on federal government lands in Canada and the United States of America have also helped to set standards.

In many mountain areas, concern has grown about the negative impacts of tourism on the natural environment, village economies and cultural traditions. The Annapurna Conservation Area Project in Nepal has been set up to address such concerns by practising multiple land use methods of resource management, combined with sustainable community development. All activities are carried out with the full participation of local people and communities, making them guardians of their resources, and are designed to ensure that local people benefit from trekking tourism and conservation.

Social and cultural pressures

6. Tourism can create social and cultural pressures related to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. In terms of its social and cultural impacts, tourism can lead to disturbance of the local way of life and to social structures, and can adversely affect traditional practices that contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. It can also impose adverse impacts on livelihoods without sharing the benefits from tourism with those who bear the tourism-related costs in terms of both the human and natural environments. Tourism can introduce resource use conflicts, such as competition between tourism and local populations for the use of limited resources of water, sanitation and energy; there can also be competition with traditional land uses, especially in heavily used areas, such as coastal zones.

B. Environmental threats to tourism

7. The viability of the tourism industry can be threatened by environmental degradation:

(a) Global warming can threaten tourism in coastal areas and small island developing States from rises in sea level. In ski resorts, snow conditions can become less reliable. And there are various other impacts on important resources for recreation and tourism. For example, the recent catastrophes caused by hurricane Mitch in 1998 affect tourism as much

as other sectors of the economy; in 1989, the cost of hurricane Hugo to the tourism industry, in lost revenue alone, was estimated at $8 billion;

(b) Loss of biological diversity linked to human activities and loss of landscape attractiveness affect a number of tourist destinations. For example, in the Mediterranean over 500 plant species are threatened with extinction, and tourism has decreased in some overbuilt destinations;

(c) Water pollution can cause damage to tourism sites in many regions, as well as contaminating the freshwater supply. Lack of freshwater will increasingly be a constraint for tourism development;

(d) Local air pollution linked to urban congestion can discourage tourists from visiting some destinations.

C. Contribution of tourism to environmental conservation

8. Tourism can significantly contribute to environmental protection, the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of natural resources. At the same time, it can also provide much needed resources and raise awareness of the value of environmental and cultural assets. Particular areas, such as parks, protected areas and cultural and natural sites, are vital assets for the development of tourism, and the tourism industry can contribute to their conservation through financial contributions, provision of environmental infrastructure and improved environmental management. Financial contributions are being made for a limited number of initiatives by the tourism industry, and that trend should be further developed. Tourism also helps to raise awareness of the local population with regard to the financial value of natural and cultural sites, making them proud of this heritage and allies for its conservation. More generally, the involvement of local communities in tourism development and operation appears to be an important condition for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

9. The possible contribution of tourism to conservation is one of the reasons explaining the current interest given to the development of nature tourism. However, for sustainable tourism, there is a need to better understand not only the benefits but also the costs of tourism. There is also a need to develop both a more systematic analysis of direct and indirect costs and benefits from tourism, and "green" accounting approaches. The current focus on nature tourism should not obscure the major challenge to make mass tourism sustainable.

II. Environmental policy challenges for the tourism industry

10. The tourism industry has developed a number of voluntary initiatives for addressing environmental issues:

(a) Environmental management of tourism facilities, especially hotels, is being widely promoted, and progress is being made, particularly for larger hotels, in waste reduction handling, management and disposal, and energy and water consumption. This has been promoted by the main international industry associations. It has also been promoted by numerous industry associations at the regional and national levels. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has taken part in these efforts. A few tour operators have also implemented environmental programmes and raised the environmental awareness of their clients;

(b) A number of environmental codes of conduct have also been developed by the tourism sector,[1] as well as action plans (such as the Caribbean Action Plan for Sustainable Tourism);

(c) The tourism industry is also increasingly interested in ecolabels as a means of promoting their facilities and destinations.[2]

However, efforts to date have been concentrated on measures which result in short-term economic benefits, and there are still many major problems to be solved to put the tourism industry on the path towards sustainability.

Box 3
Examples of user fees to support environmental conservation

The Bonaire Marine Park in the Netherlands Antilles was one of the first protected marine areas in the Caribbean to become entirely self-financing through levying of admission fees on scuba divers. Although the diving industry on Bonaire was initially uneasy about the levy of admission fees, the system has been an unqualified success since it was introduced in January 1992, and divers gave it immediate and wholehearted support. Fees support ongoing active management of the park's coral reef, sea grass and mangrove ecosystems, as well as educational activities and orientation sessions for divers, who are the largest user group in the park. Research has shown that those efforts to educate divers and therefore minimize their impact on the reef have been successful.

Seychelles in the Indian Ocean is introducing a $90 tax on travellers entering the country. The revenue will be used to preserve the environment and improve tourism facilities. In return, travellers will receive a card giving access to national parks, botanical gardens and national heritage sites on all the islands in Seychelles.

11. The key remaining challenges facing the tourism industry are to:

(a) Promote wider implementation of environmental management, particularly in the many small and medium enterprises that form the backbone of the tourism industry, and spread initiatives to all sectors of the tourism industry;

(b) Use more widely environmentally sound technologies, in particular to reduce emissions of CO_2 and other greenhouse gases and ozone-depleting substances, as set out in international agreements;

(c) Address the key issues of siting and more ecoefficient design of tourism facilities;

(d) Raise the awareness of tourism clients of the environment and social implications of their holidays, and of opportunities for their responsible behaviour;

(e) Develop a better dialogue with the local communities in travel destinations, and promote the involvement of local stakeholders in tourism ventures;

(f) Work with Governments and other stakeholders to improve the overall environmental quality of destinations;

(g) Report publicly on environmental performance.

For the tourism industry to remain credible in its commitment to sustainable development, it needs to address the above issues.

III. Environmental policy challenges for national Governments

12. A number of initiatives have been taken by Governments, in all parts of the world to: (a) develop national strategies or master plans for sustainable development of tourism; (b) develop appropriate regulatory mechanisms and tools, such as environmental assessment and the development of building regulations and environmental standards for tourism; (c) create terrestrial and marine protected areas; and (d) support voluntary initiatives by the tourism industry. However, in many countries the coastline is being overbuilt due to tourism development. Unfortunately, the same errors are being repeated. Too often, action is delayed until loss of revenue and cultural and environmental degradation have occurred. The damage that is done can be irreversible. To achieve sustainable tourism, preventative approaches must be adopted. The evidence demonstrates the need for urgent action to avoid irreversible damage from tourism, particularly in coastal and mountain areas.

13. Governments need to further develop and implement the legislative and policy frameworks for sustainable development. In particular, they need to:

(a) Ratify, if they have not already done so, and work towards the effective implementation of, international and regional environmental conventions;

(b) Integrate more fully tourism development into the overall plans for sustainable development and develop participatory approaches;

(c) Develop more widely land use planning, and protect the coastline through building restrictions (for example, legislation in France, Spain, Denmark and Egypt forbids building within a defined distance from the coast);

(d) Identify and adopt the most appropriate mix of regulation and economic instruments, and, in many cases develop economic instruments to address environmental issues;

(e) Work towards the effective enforcement of regulations and standards.

Box 4
Examples of sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean

A group of experts on sustainable tourism, meeting at Antalya, Turkey, from 17 to 19 September 1998, under the framework of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development, highlighted the means to make sustainable tourism a reality for the region. The meeting considered conventions, framework agreements, procedures and protocols; financial mechanisms, such as taxes on the environment, tourism taxes, requirements to reinvest profits in regions with tourism installations, fines for non-compliance, subsidies for the environmental upgrading of facilities, development of agro-tourism and tourism development in difficult areas; technical assistance and advice; and land use planning and protective laws.

The meeting noted that efforts currently being put into such mechanisms throughout the region do not yet match the needs for widespread effective action, and that better integration of Mediterranean tourism with sustainable development demands major efforts on training, awareness-raising, and exchange of experience and best practice information, as well as organization of the strong participation of the local population. Action is also needed on:

(a) Financial mechanisms to enable the tourism sector to contribute to the quality of destinations;

(b) Network of pilot projects and establishment of a "Mediterranean eco-label" for environmental quality of destinations and installations;

(c) Capacity-building for States, regions and tourist destinations to bring about successful integration of tourism with sustainable development;

(d) Measures to support tourism in the Mediterranean island regions.

14. Governments need to raise awareness, build capacity and promote effective action for sustainable tourism. This requires that they strive to:

(a) Improve the understanding of the benefits and burdens of tourism in environmental, social and economic terms, for the areas under their jurisdiction;

(b) Strengthen capacity for the management and control of tourism in their sphere of responsibility, and establish and maintain procedures for cooperation and coordination with neighbouring authorities, and with relevant State authorities;

(c) Provide support through pilot projects and capacity development programmes, including capacity development at the local government level;

(d) Ensure the participation of all stakeholders affected by or involved in tourism and its development, especially indigenous and local communities;

(e) Ensure that tourism makes a positive contribution to economic development, and that the economic benefits of tourism are equitably shared;

(f) Encourage and catalyse industry initiatives for sustainable tourism across all sectors of tourism, including accommodation, land, air and sea transportation, tour operators, travel agents, attractions sectors etc.;

(g) Promote changes in consumer behaviour in both tourist-originating countries and destinations towards more sustainable forms of tourism.

15. Governments will also need to develop monitoring of progress towards sustainable tourism. It is important to develop activities to monitor, control and mitigate adverse effects that may arise from tourism activities and development.

IV. Environmental policy challenges for non-governmental organizations

16. Many non-governmental organizations have already made significant steps in modifying consumers' preferences and behaviour, making sensitive issues public and highlighting problematic areas, thus influencing decisions. They have also increased environmental awareness and educational levels, with great positive results. One example is the "Blue flag" campaign, conducted by the Foundation for Environmental Education in Europe, which contributed to the improvement in the quality of European beaches and marinas.

17. The key environmental policy challenges that face non-governmental organizations are to:

(a) More specifically voice their views in tourism policies and strategies;

(b) Contribute to the development and implementation of environmental standards for tourism;

(c) Develop or participate in raising awareness and education activities for sensitizing tourists towards improving guest consumption patterns;

(d) Assist in monitoring tourism activities and development and progress towards more sustainable tourism.

V. Environmental policy challenges for the international community

18. Many international organizations, in line with their mission and field of expertise, have developed programmes and activities to help put tourism on the path towards sustainability.

19. UNEP, through its Industry and Environment Centre, and in cooperation with partners, such as the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and industry associations, has published technical reports on best practices in the tourism industry and organized conferences and workshops to share experience.[3] UNEP has also contributed at the regional level through the regional seas programmes, in particular in the Caribbean and the Mediterranean. The Caribbean Environmental Programme, together with the United States Agency for International Development, have developed the Caribbean Environmental Network to improve environmental practices in the tourism industry in the region through training, pilot studies, etc. The Mediterranean Action Plan has provided information on sustainable tourism, and

has set up an expert group on this topic within the framework of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development.

20. WTO has also been active, focusing in particular on planning at the national and local levels and on indicators for sustainable tourism, and addressing sustainable tourism in a number of regional forums.[4] A number of other international organizations have developed activities for sustainable tourism; in particular, UNESCO has addressed, *inter alia*, tourism in World Heritage Sites and cultural tourism. The secretariats of the international conventions, in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity, have provided information and catalysed action for sustainable tourism in their areas. In addition, many regional organizations, in particular the regional commissions, have also developed activities to support sustainable tourism in their region.

21. To help catalyse appropriate action, UNEP has recently proposed the "Principles for implementation of sustainable tourism". The principles are being designed to provide a coherent framework for more specific guidelines to be prepared by the various conventions (such as those on biological diversity and climate change), the regional seas action plans, and other international agreements that have already or will address tourism issues. The principles are also intended to help Governments, intergovernmental, private sector and other organizations to apply the general concept of sustainable tourism in practice.

22. The key remaining challenges facing the international community are to:

(a) Assist and support Governments in the development of national strategies or master plans for the sustainable development of tourism, and of environmental land use and building regulations and standards for tourism;

(b) Raise awareness and build capacity of all stakeholders by providing information on best practices for sustainable tourism;

(c) Encourage the private sector to develop and apply codes and guidelines, and environmental management systems, and promote the development of the use of environmental reporting by companies in the various branches of the tourism sector;

(d) Assist in assessing the environmental effectiveness of existing voluntary initiatives in the various branches of the tourism sector, and make recommendations accordingly;

(e) Promote the transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs), practices and management tools adapted for the tourism sector, and disseminate information on ESTs to Governments and the tourism industry;

(f) Work with other stakeholders to establish and disseminate lessons from best practices projects on sustainable tourism;

(g) Provide support through provision of information and capacity development programmes, particularly on the costs and benefits of tourism development, the use of economic incentives to promote sustainable tourism, and on destination management;

(h) Assist in the establishment of monitoring of progress towards sustainable tourism.

23. There are several important emerging issues with regard to tourism and environmental protection. These include:

(a) Developing partnership. For sustainable tourism, the involvement and commitment of all stakeholders are essential. However, public, private and academic sector partnerships are still underdeveloped and therefore need to be encouraged;

(b) Involvement of the banking and insurance sectors. Banks and insurance companies could greatly expedite the progress of sustainable tourism by incorporating environmental and social criteria into assessment procedures for loans, investments, and insurance. They could help to finance environmentally sound technologies and provide incentives for sustainable tourism. This approach has worked well in other contexts. Widespread involvement of the banking and insurance sectors should be sought;

(c) Use of economic instruments. The tourism industry consumes increasingly scarce natural resources. The costing of energy and water in particular could expedite greatly ecoefficiency in the tourism industry and raise revenue for the improved management of those resources. Governments should consider the development and widespread use of economic instruments for sustainable tourism;

(d) Involvement of tourism boards. Often, marketing strategies and messages are not in line with the principles of sustainable tourism. There is a need to better involve tourism boards in sustainable tourism efforts;

(e) Capacity-building of local government. In many countries, local governments have important responsibilities regarding tourism development. Capacity-building programmes should be implemented to help them understand those responsibilities, develop integrated and participatory approaches, and define and implement policies for sustainable tourism;

(f) Greater focus on transport. There is a continued development of long-haul travel. Economic, technological and management approaches should be developed to reduce emissions, waste and pollution resulting from tourism transportation. Changing consumption patterns should also be considered;

(g) Emerging types of tourism. Tourism is rapidly diversifying. Emerging forms of tourism should also develop according to sustainability criteria. Currently, the increase of cruises and the current trend towards mega-ships necessitate that the cruise ship industry develop a socially and environmentally responsible approach;

(h) Improve monitoring. Careful monitoring of impacts and results, as well as the adoption of corrective measures, are conditions for sustainable tourism. Monitoring should thus be developed by all stakeholders at all levels. As previously stated, the private sector should develop monitoring and public reporting of its activities. Local and central governments should develop monitoring tools, such as indicators, and should incorporate the results into their decision-making process. Where appropriate, participatory approaches should be used. Monitoring is currently uncommon and that should be made a priority.

Notes

[1] See UNEP, *Codes of Conduct for Tourism* (Paris, 1995); and UNEP, International Hotel Association (IHA) and International Hotels Environment Initiative, *Environmental Action Pack for Hotels* (Paris, 1995).

[2] See UNEP, *Ecolabels for the Tourism Industry* (Paris, 1998).

[3] See, for instance, UNEP and IHA, *Environmental Good Practice in Hotels: Case Studies* (Paris, 1997).

[4] See, for example, WTO, *A Practical Guide to the Development and Use of Indicators of Sustainable Tourism* (Madrid, 1995); and WTO, *Sustainable Tourism Development: Guide for Local Planners* (Madrid, 1993).